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BIOGRAPHY.

THE following sketch of the life and character of the Rev. Dr. GEORGE DUFFIELD, late minister of the second Presbyterian church in the city of Philadelphia (born October, 1732, and who died February 2d, 1790) is taken from his funeral sermon, preached by the Rev. Dr. Green.

FUNERAL panegyric has been so much abused, that it has, in a measure, defeated its own design. Extravagant and misapplied encomium, by its frequency and fallacy, has rendered even the truth suspicious. The truth, however, ought to be told; and, on the present occasion, it is our intention to be governed by it, in its rigorous strictness. And, indeed, so much may be said, without going beyond its bounds, that there is little temptation to transgress.

As a man, the reverend doctor Duffield possessed a vigorous, active, firm, and benevolent mind. He thought with energy and quickness; and he dreaded not the labour of thinking. In promptitude of conception, and readiness of utterance, few were his equals. These qualities, in early life, enabled him to preach with a frequency, of which the instances are rare: and throughout life, they gave him a consequence and utility in deliberative bodies, to which few can attain.

To the opinions which he formed, he adhered with steadiness. He was neither frightened from them by the number of his opponents, nor soothed by the respectability of their characters or stations. His behaviour, indeed, was at the farthest remove from disrespect: but he was, in an eminent degree, a man of an undaunted spirit. The firmness of his mind was a leading trait, a prominent feature of his whole character. It enabled him, in all

the vicissitudes, and under the severest trials of life (and he was familiar with them) to maintain an equanimity of conduct, which seemed to flow from the fortitude of the philosopher, mingled with the patience and resignation of the christian.

His kindness and benevolence were great and extensive. They were the ornament of his other virtues. As a husband, a father, a brother, a master, and a friend, he was singularly indulgent, tender and affectionate. But his benevolence was not confined to these limits. It led him to be, in a peculiar manner, the friend of the friendless. He espoused their cause, and advanced their interest, with the warmest zeal. In his death, the afflicted, the distressed, and the poor, have lost one of their best friends and counsellors, and one of their warmest advocates and most constant visitors. It was this part of his character, which led him to connect himself with the various humane institutions in this city, and which rendered him one of their most active, attentive, and valuable members. It was his benevolent temper of mind, likewise, which rendered him so highly esteemed by almost all denominations of christians; and which disposed him to unite an extensive charity for those who differed from him in matters of faith or opinion, with an earnest contention for what he esteemed the truth.

As a scholar, he was considerably distinguished. He early discovered a thirst for knowledge, which led him to the pursuit of liberal science. In his academical course, he rose above most of his fellows; and was afterwards employed as a tutor, in the seminary which was the nurse of his juvenile studies. His knowledge was more of the solid, than of the ornamental or polished kind. He was accurate in classic learning: and he loved philosophy in all its branches. For these reasons, he was elected a member of the Philosophical Society, in this place, of which he was a diligent attendant, and a useful member.

As a citizen, he was highly distinguished for public spirit, and the love of liberty, and for the promotion of every design, which had for its object the general welfare. No one was a more zealous and active patriot than he; or in the smaller divisions of society, more sincerely endeavoured to do service to the community. In the late struggle for liberty, in America, he was an early, a decided, and a uniform friend to his country: and since the peace, he has been equally assiduous, in using all his influence to advance the public interest and tranquillity.

As a christian, he shone conspicuously. He lived the religion which he professed. The spirit of the gospel seemed to have

tinctured his whole mind, and to possess a constant and powerful influence on his heart. He was, truly and remarkably, an example of the life of God in the soul of man. His "fellowship with the Father of his spirit," and his "conversation with Heaven," appeared to be almost uninterrupted. Nor was he less distinguished in active duty. He sought all occasions of serving his Lord. Of him it may be said with truth, that he "went about doing good."

As a divine, he was thoroughly acquainted with the most approved systems of Calvinistic divinity. He was a warm admirer and advocate of the doctrines of grace. He was ever ready to plead for, and defend them in public and private. Descended from pious parents, "from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures:" and he improved his early acquaintance with them, into a familiarity seldom acquired. He read them in their original languages, of which he was no unskilful master. In ecclesiastical history, his knowledge, if not minute, was comprehensive; and in the government and discipline of the Presbyterian church, I believe he hath not left a superior, in an acquaintance with all its parts. He was honoured for these accomplishments with the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

As a preacher of the gospel, he was indefatigable, evangelical, and successful. He was "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of life." In the early part of his ministry, while his imagination retained its fervour, he was remarkably animated in his public addresses, and unusually popular. An intimation that he was to preach, was the sure signal of a crouded auditory. His manner was always warm and forcible, and his instructions always practical. He had a talent of touching the conscience, and seizing the heart, almost peculiar to himself. He dwelt much on the great, plain and essential truths of the gospel. Yet he was master of a singularly happy method of explaining Scripture, which, in more advanced life, he frequently practised.

His first settlement in the gospel ministry, was at the town of Carlisle, in this state. Here he was abundant in labours. His natural activity and industry enabled him, not only to feed the flock of which he was the immediate overseer, but to water the vacant parts of his Lord's vineyard, to which he was contiguous, in almost an incredible degree.

These circumstances marked him out as one properly and peculiarly qualified for planting and organizing churches, in places destitute of the regular administration of gospel ordinances. To this important business he was therefore called and appointed by the Synod of New-York and Philadelphia; and, in company with

the late reverend Mr. Beatty, spent a year, in visiting the frontiers of the country, to preach the word of life to those who were perishing for "lack of knowledge;" and to form them into congregations for the stated reception and support of the gospel. A printed memorial of this tour has been given to the world; and is a monument of his zeal and labour in the cause of Christ, and for the good of souls. During his residence at Carlisle, his ministry, through the effusion and application of the divine spirit, was made effectual to turn many "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." But his talents drew him at length into a more public sphere; and placed him as the pastor of this flock. Here, my brethren, you have been witnesses, both of his respectability and fidelity, in his sacred office. You have seen him possess a distinguished weight and influence, in all the judicatures of the church to which he belonged. You have seen him happily unite "the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove," in the management of all its concerns and interests. You have seen him called, by the supreme council of the nation, to officiate as one of their chaplains, during the whole of their residence in this city. But, what he was more solicitous about than for all earthly honours, and you should remember with more care and pleasure, you have seen him "instant in season and out of season," to promote your spiritual and eternal welfare. He has truly "watched for you," as one that had the charge of souls. He has broken unto you the "bread of life." He has been to you a faithful and an "able minister of the New Testament." It was his zeal to do good, that exposed him to the disease, by which he has been called from you. Such was the man over whom we lament, and whose decease is a loss, not to you only, but to the whole church of Christ.

THE LIFE OF SIMON PETER, THE APOSTLE.

Simon, the son of Jonah, a native of Bethsaida in Galilee, where he became acquainted with our Saviour, was settled at Capernaum, a city on the lake of Gennesareth, at which place he exercised the occupation of a fisherman, and was probably at that time a married man.

The scanty memoirs of the origin and early life of Simon, are little calculated to amuse curiosity. We have here a specimen of the biographical style of the sacred penmen; who all conspire in one design, and whether they write of Abraham, of Paul, or of Peter, mean to lead us to the knowledge of Christ, from whom

those great men derived every valuable distinction. Whatsoever is irrelevant to this end, however curious or interesting, seems to be consigned to oblivion. Keeping this remark in view, as we delineate the character and record the life of Simon, it shall be our endeavour to illustrate the grace and power of the Redeemer, as they were displayed in that Apostle.

There is room to conjecture, that, previously to Simon's acquaintance with Jesus, he had been a disciple of John the Baptist, and, under his instructions had become acquainted with that repentance towards God, which is the best preparative to faith in Christ. This conjecture we found on the circumstance of his brother Andrew being one of the two disciples of John, to whom he pointed out Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God; as well as upon the readiness Simon showed to wait on Jesus, and the distinguished reception he met with from him. No sooner had Andrew ascertained that Jesus was the Messiah, than he announced the discovery to Simon, as to one who also eagerly looked forward to his advent, and would hail with joy the rising of that bright Morning Star. Nor was he deceived. Loving the truth and anxious for farther manifestations of it, Simon instantly accompanied his brother to Jesus; and was received by him in such a manner, as seems to prove his integrity, as well as to predict the lustre of his future character. For as soon as Jesus beheld him, he said, *Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah; thou shalt be called Cephas*, a stone, or rock. If these considerations, connected with the idea, that the grand object of John's mission was to prepare a people for the Lord, and the probability that Jesus would select some of his disciples from the school of that venerable prophet, appear sufficient to justify our conjecture, we have here an exemplification of one grand rule of Christ's moral government. *To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

Soon after this interview, as Simon and Andrew were fishing on the lake, Jesus invited them to become his followers, with the assurance, that he would raise them from their humble occupation, to the noble employment of *fishers of men*. This promise, intelligible as it is to us, was probably, at that time, somewhat enigmatical to them, as their prejudices respecting the temporal reign of the Messiah, naturally led to the misconstruction of our Lord's figurative language. Nevertheless, their hearts being prepared for the good seed of God's word, and believing at the same time Jesus to be the Messiah, they yielded him a free obedience; though without well understanding the nature of his kingdom, or to what extent he meant to engage their services.

Let us pause, in order to make a few observations on the character of Simon, as well as on the extraordinary procedure of divine providence, in selecting the apostles of christianity from among the fishermen of Galilee. From the gospel history we are perhaps authorized to sketch the following outline of Simon's character. To a hardy and muscular frame, he seems to have united a clear and vigorous understanding; unimproved, indeed, by human science, but not wholly uncultivated, nor uninstructed in the law of the Lord. His ingenuous nature seems to have known no disguise. His imagination fervid, his heart feeling, his passions strong, his spirit bold and decisive, he was ever prompt to speak and to act; but from such a modification of character he was too frequently betrayed into faults, which are seen and avoided by minds little capable of those generous feelings, which flourished in the breast of Simon. Upon this character, piety stamped genuine worth; giving it its true direction, and rendering him willing to be taught, and apt to learn. Such was the man, whose fire the lowly Jesus was to temper, whose rashness he was to correct, whose self-confidence he was to cast down, and on whose fervid and bold spirit he was to engraft the meekness of heavenly wisdom.

To the intelligent christian, the wisdom of Jesus Christ in the selection of his apostles, needs no justification. He traces in it the same great hand, which created the world from nothing. He sees the mouths of infidels shut, who would persuade us, that the fishermen of Galilee were equal to the fabrication of the glorious Gospel, and to the task of imposing its authority on the learned and the great, the rich and the wise. At Athens and Jerusalem, in the days of our Saviour as in our own, learning and philosophy were little connected with humble inquiry and sober thought. The Jew drivelled, and the Greek raved. Then, as now, the fiercest and proudest opponents of our humbling faith, were the boasted disciples of science and philosophy. Galilean fishermen were more docile in learning the self-denying doctrines of the cross, than the scholars of Gamaliel were in unlearning the prejudices they had imbibed from their master. We therefore conclude, not only that the truth of christianity was more strongly asserted, and the power of God more illustriously displayed, by their appointment; but that they were, in fact, the fittest instruments which the Jewish nation, at that time, furnished, and probably, for various reasons, the fittest instruments which human nature, in its present state, in any age or in any country, could furnish.

Here, however, there is a danger of pushing our conclusions to unwarrantable lengths. The partial advocates of an unlearned

ministry should remember, that the gift of tongues superseded the painful discipline of schools and colleges; and that the luminous and energetic inspirations of the spirit would be degraded by a comparison with the slow deductions of reason, or the cold productions of mechanical rhetoric. We, who claim no such aids, must be content to burn our lamp, and to ply our studies; never however losing sight of this solemn truth, that it is the exclusive prerogative of religion, to make us truly wise, and good, and useful, and happy.

As a previous step to his exaltation to the Apostleship, Simon was called to a personal attendance on our Saviour. Under this great teacher, he was to be emptied of himself, and freed from those inveterate Jewish prejudices, which were likely to take strong hold of a mind constituted like his. His rude manners were also to be humanized by the benign converse of his Lord. From him he was to learn a doctrine without error. In him he was to behold an example without spot. And thus was he fitted, in common with other Apostles, to receive the mantle of their ascending Lord. Would to God, that our young candidates for the holy ministry, considered well the solemn responsibility of the office to which they aspire! Then would they feel the force of the words of Moses; *Send by whom thou wilt send, but send not by me.* Or, if animated by a portion of Isaiah's fire, they freely offered their services in the sanctuary, they would, at least, be sensible of the necessity of themselves previously undergoing a strict discipline in the school of Christ, before they stood forth as teachers and examples of the flock.

About a year after Simon became the disciple of Jesus, the miraculous powers of his Master were displayed on two occasions, which nearly concerned him. His wife's mother was raised from a sick bed, and honoured with an opportunity of evincing her gratitude, by ministering to Him, who had restored her to health. But though this species of miracle was calculated to produce the strongest sense of personal obligation, it seems (perhaps from the commonness of its occurrence) by no means to have affected his mind with the wonder, awe, and faith, which were produced by the miraculous draught of fishes.

For when Simon, who had been fruitlessly toiling all night, and who, without any hope of success, had reluctantly let down his net once more, at the command of Christ, saw that the draught of fishes was so great as to break the nets, and to fill both the ships till they began to sink, his astonishment was inexpressible; and the fervid piety of his mind discovering itself in his expressions,

he threw himself at the feet of his master, and exclaimed, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!* But our Saviour cheered the humble spirit of his servant, and both to confirm and illustrate the promise originally made to him, said, *Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* And no sooner had Simon and Andrew, and James and John, brought their ships to land, than they laid aside the trade of fishermen, and wholly devoted themselves to the service of Christ. By this miracle, Simon was taught to whom he was to look for direction in his ministry, and to whom he was to ascribe the glory of his success.

Not long after, our Saviour thought proper to initiate his disciples into the ministry for which they were designed, and to set them apart for it by a solemn ordination. The process of this important transaction deserves our notice. First, he excites the pity of his disciples for the perishing souls of sinners, by pointing out to them the deplorable state of the multitudes who flocked to his ministry, but who were as sheep *scattered, and without a Shepherd.* He then rouses their zeal, by remarking, that the harvest was plenteous, though the labourers were few; and exhorts them to pray to the Lord of the harvest, to send forth more labourers into his harvest. When dispositions suitable for their work had been thus raised in them, he himself retired to a mountain to pray for them. Having spent the night in intercession, in the morning he collected his disciples, and from their number selected twelve, whom he named Apostles, and whom he invested with power to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal every manner of disease. Simon had the honour of being the first nominated; and on this occasion he publicly received from our Lord the distinguished appellation of Cephas, or Peter, which was descriptive of the strength of his character, as well as in allusion to his being one of those twelve spiritual stones, on which the Church was to be founded, Jesus Christ being the head stone of the corner. How interesting is the scene! The fainting sheep and the sympathizing shepherd, the praying disciples and their interceding Lord, form a picture which every christian bishop, and every candidate for the holy ministry, should ever have before his eyes.

The next incident we shall mention, as serving to throw any particular light on the character of this great Apostle, took place immediately after our Saviour had made an astonishing display of his power, in the multiplication of a few loaves and fishes. Having sent his disciples across the lake, in the ship which attended him, he dismissed the multitude, and retired, as was his frequent practice, alone, into a mountain to pray. But at the fourth watch

of the night, while the apostles were painfully rowing against a contrary wind and high sea, Jesus went to them walking on the water. Neither their courage, nor their piety, nor their miraculous gifts, could sustain the shock of this wonderful spectacle; but they were *troubled*, saying, *It is a spirit, and cried out through fear.* But our Saviour's well known voice soon calmed their terror. *It is I*, said he, *be not afraid.* Mark the rapid and violent transition which took place in their minds, and learn to guard against such transitions. St. Peter had probably, the moment before, been strongly agitated with fear. He is now wrapt in admiration of the power of his Lord, and is even possessed by a desire to prove the strength of his faith, by walking with him on the sea. Hurried away by his ardent feelings, and not reflecting, whether he had any warrant for this adventurous display of faith, or whether in attempting it he acted from right motives, he exclaimed, *Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.* He received the permission he solicited, leaped on the water, and, sustained by Omnipotence, walked on the waves to go to Jesus. But when he observed the boisterous wind, he was *afraid*, and beginning to sink, he cried, *Lord, save me!* And immediately Jesus stretched out his hand, with this gentle reproof, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

We have already censured the self-confidence of St. Peter in this attempt; but let not the frigid son of syllogism and demonstration deride the error of this illustrious apostle. It was an error which none but a St. Peter was likely to commit; and he, who seeth not as man seeth, tenderly turned his censure, rather to the weakness of Peter's faith, than to his presumption of its strength. Yet happy had it been for the apostle, if this impressive lesson had precluded the necessity of that more humiliating one, which he afterwards received in the palace of the high priest.

The next morning, Jesus preached to the people in the synagogue at Capernaum, when many of those were present, who the day before, would have made him a king; and endeavoured to show them what was the true nature of his kingdom. He proposed himself to them as the true manna, and the living bread, which he would give for *the life of the world;* and this declaration he peremptorily confirmed, by saying, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* But the doctrines of the atonement and faith in Christ, which were couched under this highly figurative language, appeared to the people unintelligible and absurd; and so generally were they offended, that from *that time, many of his disciples went back, and walked no*

more with him. On this occasion, Jesus addressed to the twelve this pathetic inquiry, *Will ye also go away?* Though probably they also were amazed at his doctrine, yet the miracle of the last night was too recent to allow them to entertain a doubt of his divine authority, and St. Peter answered, with his constitutional ardour, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life: And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* To confirm his apostles in this fundamental point of christianity, Jesus soon after asked them, *Whom do men say that I am?* and after he had heard the various opinions which were in circulation, he put the question, *but whom say ye that I am?* Here again the zealous Peter fervently replied, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Our Lord immediately avows the character which St. Peter had ascribed to him, applauds the faith which, under the form of a servant, could recognize the only begotten of the Father, pronounces him blessed, and declares that this grand discovery was not the effect of human sagacity, but of divine revelation. Then, in allusion to the name he had given him, Jesus added, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

So warm a testimony could not fail to set St. Peter very high in the estimation of the other disciples of our Lord; and it seems to have had the effect of raising him too high in his own. Of this he not long after gave a strong indication. For Jesus having established his disciples in the primary truth noticed above, began now to develope a second, equally necessary to salvation, though more opposed to the proud and carnal reasonings of men. He predicted his sufferings and death; but they neither understood the necessity of his death, nor the glorious effects which were to flow from it. The idea of a *crucified* Lord was subversive of all they had been taught to hope from the Messiah's advent, while it stood directly opposed to that love of human praise and distinction, and to that fear of worldly shame, which form so striking a part of the character of fallen man. Nor can we wonder that they should stumble at a doctrine, which many reputed wise, even in our own day, are pleased to call foolishness. Here again Peter betrayed the worldliness of his spirit, as well as his characteristic rashness; for taking his Master aside with affectionate freedom, he tried to dissuade him from his purpose, *Be it far from thee, Lord! this shall not be unto thee.* The severity of our Lord's reproof,

proves that there must have been something exceedingly wrong in the spirit, which dictated these words of Peter; for he turned, and said to him, *Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things which be of God, but those that be of men.* Let the *rational* christians, who reject the doctrine of the atonement, or who plead for the love of human praise, or the fear of worldly shame, as lawful motives of action, explain on what ground, upon their principles, this favoured disciple could merit such pointed reprehension.

This failure of St. Peter's did not forfeit his master's confidence. He knew the man, and how to free him from his constitutional defects. He selected him along with James and John to be the witnesses of his transfiguration, and of the conversation he then had with Moses and Elias respecting *his decease*; on which occasion we find him manifesting his usual want of consideration. By this manifestation of the glory of Christ, the disciples were made more docile and respectful; such freedoms as St. Peter had lately taken were checked; and by the testimony of their legislator, and the greatest of their prophets, they were taught to consider the sufferings and death of Christ, as events necessary to the accomplishment of the law and the prophets. Nevertheless, they did not then thoroughly understand the design of the vision; for as they descended from the mountain, they questioned *what the rising of the Son of Man from the dead should mean.*

Simon Peter and his brethren had now spent three years in the school of Christ, and had made, it may be presumed, great improvements in knowledge and piety; but they had still to learn the grounds and consequences of his death, the evidences of his resurrection, and the spiritual nature of his kingdom. These they were to be taught, as in former instances, by the eye as well as the ear; not only by words full of grace, but by the mighty works of their master. He therefore declared to them, that his hour was at hand, and conducted them to the appointed scene of his sufferings, with a cheerful firmness, which excited their astonishment. The curse pronounced on the fruitless fig-tree, the second day after his entry into Jerusalem, fixed the attention of St. Peter, and ought to fix ours. The nature of the miracle, and the particular time at which it was performed, seem to indicate, that it was intended as a warning to all the apostles, of the sudden and total ruin, which one of them soon after brought upon himself, by unfruitfulness and apostacy; and it forms a striking emblem of this event. Reader, mayest thou never feel the blasting of the Saviour malediction!

[*To be continued.*]

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL DISCUSSIONS.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, A TROPHY OF THE DIVINE GRACE.

NO. IV.

"Do you not know me?" said a stranger, much disguised with liquor, to a clergyman whom he met on a journey, "Do you not know me? I am one of *your converts*, *you* converted me at such a time, in such a place, under such circumstances." "It may be," replied the clergyman coolly; "it is like some of *my work*; had *God* converted you, you would not have been seen in your present situation." A pretension to a saving change, when most positive, is no evidence that the pretension is just.

The real christian is modest and unassuming; but the hypocrite is bold and confident. John said nothing, but silently followed his master; another would have said much while inattentive to his master's footsteps. By the fruit the tree is known. To this test let Nebuchadnezzar's character be brought. The fruit at one period was evil, an evidence that the tree was then corrupt: if at another, the fruit be good, the evidence is conclusive that the tree had undergone a favourable change.

In the obstinacy and rebellion of the heart we find the chief seat of wickedness. This, in the present instance, was assailed by the degrading, the severe, the tedious calamity under which he fell. It was a mighty weapon in the hand of God: it pulled down the strong holds: imaginations fell, and every thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God; every thought was brought into captivity. He was debased, not with respect to his external circumstances only, but chiefly with respect to the temper and disposition of his mind. Nothing of his former ferocity and pride are apparent. You see him as a little child; all is meekness and innocency itself.

The Scripture does not blazon, in a parade of words, the triumphs of grace. We are presented with a striking feature, which some existing circumstance brings into view, and are left to draw the conclusion. Converts have too humbling views of themselves to vaunt of their attainments: and the dignity of scripture is best preserved by unfolding the most astonishing acts in a word, or hint, which escapes the notice of the inconsiderate, but which makes the deepest impression upon observing minds. Solomon's recovery from the error of his way is concluded, from the lessons of wisdom and piety given in the books of Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes; the conversion of our Lord's fellow-sufferer

from his behaviour on the cross; and of the multitude mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles from their joining themselves to the church. Let these observations be remembered whilst a statement is made of circumstances which justify the conclusion, that such a change as has been mentioned took place in Nebuchadnezzar's character.

Having recovered the full use of his reason he was cheerfully received by his subjects. No doubt, before he again took the reins of government he did public homage to God; and, most likely, on the very spot which had witnessed his impiety. What an instructive and intelligent writer has represented to have taken place, is by no means improbable. According to this account, Daniel was commanded to assemble the grandees of the kingdom in the plain of Dura. The king appeared in his diadem and royal robes. Raised on an eminence he was seen serene and mild. A majestic air was softened with tenderness. He took off his diadem, prostrated himself on the ground, and thrice repeated the tremendous name of *Jehovah*. His feelings were too strong for utterance. In profound silence he adored the Eternal. Rising from the ground he addressed the multitude: "People of all nations, you here formerly beheld the extravagant marks of my impious and abominable pride. Here I usurped the rights of Deity, and forced you to worship the works of mens' hands. The Most High, to punish this excess of irreligion, condemned me to eat grass seven years with the beasts. The times are accomplished; I have lifted mine eyes to heaven and acknowledged his power; my reason and understanding are restored. O Daniel, your God is a God of gods, and a King of kings. Princes and people do homage to his greatness." Pronouncing these words, the whole assembly raised shouts of joy, and filled the air with acclamations in honour of the God of Israel.

Entering on the administration of government he survived a few months only, during which he corrected many disorders which had taken place; he expressed his detestation at wickedness, making his own son, who had behaved wickedly, a public example; and died like one of the patriarchs, foretelling what God would do in the last days.

The statement now made of the steps taken by Nebuchadnezzar previously to his assuming again the reins of government, and of his administration afterwards, agrees with what his own decree, preserved in the book of Daniel, publicly announced. This decree carries conviction to the mind; it discovers a new man, in whom a change was produced, so great, so extensive, and so universal, as no power but the power of God could effect. It be-

gins breathing benevolence to men: it contains a detail of what had befallen him: it concludes adoring the Most High.

"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations and languages that dwell in all the earth, Peace be multiplied unto you." Daniel iv. 1. None of his other decrees discover the spirit apparent in this; the others carry in them the sword, the fire, destruction; but this, peace, kindness, and safety. Like an apostle he sends them consolation: like the Prince of Peace, he seeks their welfare; and for their information on a subject of the highest moment, he published this decree; "I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great *are* his signs! and how mighty *are* his wonders! his kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion *is* from generation to generation." Daniel iv. 2, 3. David told those who feared the Lord what God had done for him; christians are required to give an account of the faith which is in them; Paul justified his advocating christianity, by a relation of the great event which induced him to become its advocate. Nebuchadnezzar pursues the same measure; he gives an unaffected narration of what had taken place. His circumstances, uncommonly prosperous, had lulled him asleep in sinful security from which he could be roused by no common events of providence, and no customary admonitions. The evil day at last came. He was brought into desolation in a moment. Two objects were in view. "Let him know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men;" let him also know "that the basest of men are sometimes set up." Those objects were completely gained. Of God's universal government, and of his own unworthiness and guilt, he acquired a reverential and a humbling sense. "I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and, for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me." Dan. iv. 34—36. His whole soul seems to be transfused into the sentiment which concludes the decree; "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and honour, the King of

heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Dan. iv. 37.

Recollect the facts which have now been established, and determine, if there be not reason to believe that a gracious and thorough change had been effected in the heart and life of the prince of Babylon. In conversion are there *just* and *reverent thoughts* of God? *These* Nebuchadnezzar acquired; he speaks of God, as inspired writers speak, and rising even above himself, is lost in a height and depth, a breadth and length which passeth knowledge. Do the views which men receive of God in conversion, lead them to worship, and to use their influence with others that they also may worship? Nebuchadnezzar became a devout worshipper, and took pains to engage others in the exercise of this duty. Is it the nature of conversion to humanize the heart, and to unite men in love, and in mutual good offices? For the first time, Nebuchadnezzar felt as a man, his heart was affectionate, and his conduct kind. Is *humility* a constant attendant of conversion, which neither conceals the folly of former conduct, nor lessens its extravagance, but admits that folly in all its extent, and confesses with contrition the extravagance, that the triumph of divine grace may appear the more conspicuous? Nebuchadnezzar was *clothed with humility*, he neither conceals his former folly nor lessens its extravagance, being only anxious that in the change produced in him men might acknowledge the hand of God. His decree, his worship, his future conduct tended to deepen these impressions, and to render them lasting. In as far as piety to God, benevolence to men, and deep humility are evidences of conversion, never was there a more sincere convert than the prince of whom I have been speaking. Over him divine grace gained a complete triumph. Let him rank with Manassah of Judea, and Saul of Tarsus. At one period, more daring rebels against God, and greater pests of society, cannot be mentioned; at another, they yielded obedience to God, and became real blessings to society.

Turn aside and view this great sight: the bush in flames, but not consumed; a fire was prepared, was kindled, was blown up; not to harden, not to torture, not to consume; but to melt, to refine, and to purify. The perverseness of this rebel was resisted and overcome; he was brought to the dust, without any power either to oppose or to escape, and nothing saved him from sinking irrecoverably into a gulph of misery and despair, but that power which he had set at defiance, that mercy which he had despised.

It was an astonishing power which reduced confusion to order, darkness to light, a rude tempestuous chaos, to a beautiful regular

system; the same power was necessary to render a haughty, rebellious spirit humble and submissive. At the sight, the morning stars sung together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.

Let us glorify God in all the triumphs of his grace and power. Examples of both are found in every age of the world, and among every nation of men. When the whole shall be assembled, they shall be a glorious company, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Let all, let each be anxious to become the subjects of the grace and the power of God, that their hearts may be in tune, to join in the celestial anthem; "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. i. 5, 6.

PHILOLOGOS.

CALCULATION OF TIME.

HAVING seen the revolution of one year more, and so recently entered on the progression of another, it is doubtless a point of time at which it will be proper to make a serious and religious pause, to look back on the years which are past, and forward on those which remain, and, having stated the real amount, to consider how we may redeem the time we have lost, and improve that which may yet be before us, that we may not be bankrupts at last, but may enter on eternity enriched with the profits of time. To these reflections I am led by these remarkable words in the 90th Psalm, 12th verse: "*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*" By wisdom, in this place, we are to understand, that which Solomon, in the 12th of Ecclesiastes, 13th verse, intends, by "*fearing God, and keeping his commandments.*" It is serious, practical, vital piety. And we are here taught to "*number our days;*" to make such an estimate or statement of their length and importance, as that we may thereby be induced to apply our hearts to this wisdom.

But how shall we thus calculate our time? First, in respect to its *length:*

The duration of time, setting aside the relation which it bears to eternity, is supposed to be measured with propriety by the diurnal and annual rotation of the sun. Under this view, every portion of time has a certain definite length. This day is as long and as short as yesterday was; and yesterday was as long and as short as to-morrow will be. The last year was as

long and as short as the year before it; and the year before it was no longer nor shorter than the present shall have been when it is concluded. This measure gives every denomination of time the same length invariably. But *our views of it* are more arbitrary; and, consequently, oftentimes very different. Though time in itself is the same, yet the same portion of it, when it is past, appears to us much shorter than when it is to come. This year will consist of the very same number of days, hours, and minutes, as the last; and yet, because it is this year, almost the whole of it before us, it is seemingly of a much greater length. The eye of the mind contracts the one whilst it enlarges the other. But there is an error both ways. We are fond of running into extremes. If then, by our meditations on time, we would be excited to apply our hearts unto wisdom, we must correct our arithmetic. But how is this to be done? Doubtless, by making proper abatements, and proper allowances for those things which may be the causes of the error.

As to the time past. The more obvious reasons why we are apt to think it so much shorter than it really is, may be the following. We are sensible how much more inclined we are to look forward than backward. We consider time past as lost and perished; and care not to employ our thoughts about it, as being what we have now no concern in, as a thing utterly destroyed, and swallowed up in the gulph of nonentity. This disregard to the past is likewise greatly increased by our aversion to self-inquiry. We very well know, that our lives have been such as will not bear a strict and impartial scrutiny; and that they contain too much matter for self-crimination and shame. We therefore turn our backs on the past, and endeavour to consign it to oblivion, lest, by the remembrance of it, we should disturb our repose. Besides, we take account of time past by our memory, and disappointed expectations.

First, by our memory. The time we have lived, is longer or shorter, as we remember more or less about it. Now, it is but little we can recover of the train of our actions on our most critical and careful recollection; and much less on a transient or superficial review. It is not then to be wondered at, that we have so contracted conceptions of the years which are gone. It proceeds, either from the weakness of our memory, or from the trifling and unimportant nature of our actions, which prevents our due consideration of them, and, consequently, their making any permanent traces on the faculty of retention.

Here and there, indeed, we can recollect one and another of

the most remarkable; and perhaps we can remember, that so many days or months intervened; but the actions or events of those intervening months or days being utterly lost, they are all as so much unoccupied space; and because unoccupied, or empty, they seem to us almost nothing. So that we bring the periods of those actions or events, which we do recollect, close to each other, excluding entirely the time, as well as occurrences, which lay between them. Thus the space between two stars, though immensely great, yet, containing no series of visible objects, by which to measure it, is, in appearance, no more than a few miles of land interspersed with fields, rivers, and houses, which serve as mediums for the eye to fasten upon, and to form a judgment of the distance: and two stars, near upon conjunction, as the space between them is hidden, will seem to be but a few miles apart, although the one may be many more thousands of miles above our earth than the other.

Secondly, by disappointed expectations. Experience undeceives us as to the mighty thoughts which we had of the year 1805, when it began. It then appeared to include a great length of time. We fancied the end of it to be immensely distant; but now, having travelled it over, we find our mistake. It is not a hundredth part so long. And, being disappointed, and chagrined too perhaps, when we think of the abortion of the many projects which we had to accomplish in it, we are apt to run into the other extreme, and judge it to be much less than it really is.

If, then, we would number our days which are past, so as to apply our hearts unto wisdom, we must, in the calculation, make allowances for these and the like causes of error. They vastly diminish the number of our figures, and reduce the sum total almost to nothing. Not that we are to count so largely as to make the sum greater than the composition of figures, which the better measures of time have given us; (though indeed there is not much danger of this) but we must endeavour to ascertain as much of the proper amount as we can. This will tend to make us thankful for the time we have already enjoyed. Time, how little soever valued in possession, is an inestimable gift of God. When we judge of the time we have lived by those false appearances mentioned, we conceive meanly of the gift, and ungratefully detract from the bounty of the giver. It will likewise tend to make us more humble for having squandered away and misemployed so much of it. When we do not thus number our days, we forget with how many years we have been favoured, and how much time we have wasted, if not worse than wasted, in every year we have

lived; how long a season we have had for moral and religious improvement; and how little of this important work is yet done. Poor, in this case, will be the excuse which is founded in the fancied shortness of the time elapsed. Such fancy indeed is productive of much evil. The man who has been trifling away, and consults not the clock or the sun to know the hour of the day, but concludes that little has passed, because he observes not its progress, will be encouraged in his sloth, and still delay to set about his work. The effect is the same in our most important concerns.

We are also to number our days *which are to come*, so as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. And how is this to be done? In our computation of the future, we are as apt to run into the extreme of length, as, in the former, into that of shortness. We are now therefore to make proper abatements for the causes of this error. And needful, indispensably needful, it is. This error is the fatal source of the ruin of many. "'Tis time enough," is the general language or thought of the careless, when they look forth into the years between the present and their death.

To obviate the evil, we must make abatement for imagination. As memory of the past lessens and contracts, so it is the nature of the imagination to extend the future beyond its due bounds. Our reason indeed is given us to correct this extravagance. But what shall we say? We love to be deceived. And we will fetter our reason, lest it should rise up too strong, and rob us of those pleasant prospects, which yield us so much greater amusement.

We are likewise to abate for the multiplicity of our designs and projects. By these we are fond of estimating our time to come; and we will lengthen out this as we multiply them. With different characters and professions, it is true, they are different; and some have more and some fewer; but, with all, they generally require a great deal of time; and we will grasp at as much as we think they will require. It is, indeed, a poor reason why we should stretch out our time beyond its due bounds, because forsooth we have work for it. Yet, we make it a reason; and so purposely mistake in our reckoning.

We must also make abatements for the hopes which we cherish in relation to futurity. We sit down with the expectation, that, by a certain time, we shall see a great many agreeable events; and, being in haste for their approach, we think every minute intervening to be double. In like manner, he who is dissatisfied in himself, because of afflictive or precarious circumstances, counts every day to be ten. Weeks are years with

him, and years are so many ages. But, still, whether to us it seems swift or slow, time moves on in one steady invariable motion. Yet so foolish are we, that, to suit our designs or our humours, what is wanting in length we will piece out in conception. But why should we thus continue deceiving ourselves? The consequence is obvious and unavoidable. By so doing, we continue to delay the most important of all concerns, those which relate to the world to come. Did we realize as truth that declaration of the apostle, that "the time is short," we should live and act as quite different persons. We should look on all earthly things with quite another eye. We should wisely apply our hearts to the more valuable objects and permanent concerns of eternity. Our hopes and our fears, our impassioned desires, and all our satisfactions which relate to these temporary things, would be vastly cooled, and reduced to a just moderation.

These documents of wisdom will appear with still greater evidence and force, if we consider the relation which our time bears to eternity. Any object is long or short in proportion to the mediums by which we measure it. Hitherto we have only been removing the false measures of time, that it may appear in its proper dimensions as compared with itself. By this we have reduced it to a small compass indeed. Yet in numbering our days, we are not only to count what sums of length they contain in themselves, when mutually compared, but also what proportions they bear to other sums, to which they refer. Nothing is so obviously related to time as eternity. And indeed we are far more concerned with the latter than with the former. It is therefore of the greatest importance to bear on our minds their natural and just proportions. True, indeed, it is the prerogative of Deity alone to have a positive and adequate idea of that stupendous duration; and it is He only, who can have a proper conception of the comparative nothingness of time. Nevertheless, we can, in some obscure manner, conceive somewhat of it. It is as a mariner surveying the ocean from on board a ship sailing in the midst of it. He sees the ocean, but not the whole ocean; and, where his sight, by its weakness, is bounded, he can conceive in his mind, that the ocean extends perhaps thousands of leagues farther than his ocular vision. Now, when we thus dwell on eternity, what a little thing is time! What, but as a speck, or less, in the shoreless prospect of an ocean!

We should also consider, that our longest time in this life is, not only short, but uncertain. Short as a day or an hour may be,

who knows what a day or an hour may bring forth? When therefore we have ascertained the sum total of the longest life, and applied it to our own, we ought to consider whether it be most probable, that the whole shall be ours or not? This question any neighbouring grave-yard will answer. There count from one to a hundred years of age, and probably you will not find a period between them, which has not been the last of some one or another. Then say; "Have I any charter from heaven securing to me any longer continuance than that of those, who have died at the same, or a more advanced age than my present?" And having thus done, observe the remainder. What is it? Years are out of the question: but perhaps I may tell one year at least? No: perhaps then an hour? No, not one hour; for nothing is secure but *the present moment;* and this is flying off like "an arrow," or "a weaver's shuttle." This is the whole product of the calculation. What is past is no more mine: what is to come I dare not say I shall ever see. This view is enough even to alarm us into wisdom. In such a case, is it for me to be regaling my fancy with long and luxuriant prospects of time? Is it for me to be reaching after the bursting bubbles of worldly honour, or the empty names of civil distinction? Is it for me to be "pulling down my barns, and building greater;" and saying to my soul, "take thy rest," when I know not, but that "this very night my soul will be required of me."

Consider again, that, uncertain as our time is, it is nevertheless of prodigious importance. Time may be long or short, yet if, in regard to eternal concerns, it be not important, what doth it avail? It may be wholly devoted to the cares and amusements of this world. But we know it to be otherwise; though we care not to realize how great its importance is. Yes; were it but a moment, it is pregnant with eternal things. The shorter, indeed, and the more uncertain, it is still the more important. Each moment is a figure; and its quantity is of no less than immeasurable import. Suppose then all the figures in the number of our days, to be added into one sum, how great must be the importance of the whole! What can equal it? I answer nothing but *the present moment*. This may seem a paradox; yet it is true. If we had now in our hands the whole of our time past and future, we should doubtless possess it at once in the whole of its value. But neither the one nor the other is our time. The past is extinct, the future uncertain. Yet the whole sum of all that is important is suspended on our proper use of time. And what time have we but the *present?* This, if duly considered, would effectually cure us of that fatal proneness to defer the business of reformation and re-

pentance until some future, more convenient, season. No longer should we be impatient to shake off the present time, and call for an hourly change of follies and amusements to shorten its irksome and tedious space. Each day, in short, it becomes us to live, as if it were our last. "Each day's a life," saith the celebrated author of the Night Thoughts, "and shall we kill each day? If trifling kills, sure vice must butcher. Oh, what heaps of slain cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroyed is suicide, where more than blood is spilt. Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites, hell threatens; all exert in effort; all, more than creation, labours. Yet, is there in creation what, amidst this tumult universal, winged despatch, and ardent energy, supinely yawns? Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate, fate irreversible, entire, extreme, endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulph a moment trembles; drops! And man, for whom all else is in alarm! And yet, he sleeps, as the storm rocked to rest! Throw years away! Throw empires, and be blameless.—Moments seize; heaven is on their wing—A moment we may wish, when worlds want wealth to buy."

ON FREE THINKING.

It is usual with mathematicians, and some others, who, on every occasion affect a more than common accuracy, to set out in their inquiries with a list of definitions and axioms. The nature of this paper allows, and indeed demands, an easier mode of composition; not cramped with such rigid formalities, but free to expatiate on its subject in a copious and popular way; though, should it be thought needful, it may be permitted to draw up its forces in the close compacted form of demonstration. He who would combat such mutable things as vice and error, that, Proteus like, are perpetually revolving into new shapes, will often find it necessary to change his method of assault. It may not be improper, on the entrance of our present speculation, to lay down the following definition of a free-thinker, with a few words of illustration. I do not mean as the term may be generally understood in the world, but according to a more exact consideration of things themselves. A free-thinker, then, is one *who can think as he pleases, or according to the determinations of his will.* This definition seems perfectly agreeable to common sense, and to speak for itself. If a man's thoughts be always obedient to his pleasure, or the order of his will, he certainly thinks as freely as it is possible to conceive any one to do: nay, he only thinks

freely so far as this is the case; for either he thinks conformably to his will or pleasure, or in contrariety to them, or without any will or pleasure at all, or, finally, in a manner compounded of the three together. Now, if a man think in contrariety to his will or pleasure, he certainly is not a free-thinker, unless he be so who has lost the government of his thoughts, which for a while are deaf, as it were, to all the commands and orders of his will; and if he thinks without any determination of his will or pleasure (if it may be called thinking) and be only a mere passive subject of ideas and perceptions, he is just as free as a mirror that reflects a variety of transient images: it therefore evidently follows, that a man is only so far a free-thinker as his thoughts flow in agreement with his will or pleasure. I believe, in the present state, our *thinking* is of a mixt nature, made up of the three kinds above specified; but yet it is only *free* in proportion as it partakes of the first, viz. as it corresponds with the determinations of our will.

It will appear from the above remarks, that free-thinking, according to the moral disposition of the person, may be good or ill; as a man's pleasure may be to think wrong and wickedly as well as otherwise. It is not the freeness of our thoughts, which alone is sufficient to constitute them virtuous; something more is requisite to this purpose. A band of robbers, hid in the dark retreats of a forest, may consult very freely how to seize some rich booty they have in prospect; perhaps more so than a cabinet council, when the great concerns of a kingdom claim their consideration; and there is a kind of intellectual banditti, joined in close confederacy, up and down the world, to plunder the weak and unsettled of all their little remaining stock of reason and virtue; who, in such inglorious schemes, I doubt not, exert their small talents with all the freedom of the greatest philosophers.

A wicked being, or one whose will and pleasure is corrupt, and who naturally delights in what is vile and hurtful, is the more to be dreaded in proportion as his freedom of thought and action is increased. It is happy when the faculties of such a being are clogged in their exercise, chilled with terrors, shackled with fears, or fail in their effect by a want of skill adequate to the malignity of intention. On the other hand, a good being, whose taste and pleasure is truly virtuous, becomes still better and more lovely by how much his exercises are more free and disencumbered. The opposite motions of each will be the swifter as impediments are removed; the one still rising to higher degrees of virtue and felicity, the other plunging deeper in iniquity and wretchedness.

A man possessed of great abilities, without a virtuous disposi-

tion of heart, is one of the most dangerous creatures in the world. In private life, he is fitted to create suspicion and terror; as every one connected with him must live under perpetual apprehension, of being duped by his policy or oppressed by his injustice. In the state, he is apt and qualified to be a powerful instrument of tyranny, or, on the other hand, to be a popular incendiary; in secret cabals, to blow the coals of sedition, and then, like Nero on the top of his palace, to view with infernal triumph the conflagration he has kindled. Such are his pastimes in the affairs of the present life, and these may be styled the innocent sports of his genius, compared with the dreadful evils that mark his steps when he has once set his foot on sacred ground, whether he advance with the gravity of an old philosopher, or with the engaging art and manner of a fine gentleman; for the devil has emissaries of all characters, to suit the various casts and humours of the world.

It is not then a mere freedom of thought, simply considered, which has in it any thing valuable, or which confers any virtue or dignity on the possessor: on the contrary, if the person be of an ill moral character, such a freedom can only serve to render him the more base and detestable: it adds wings, as it were, to his impiety, and enables him with a towering pride to brave heaven, who might else have passed his days a humble reptile of the earth. A wicked free-thinker is like some hardened villain, who, neither awed by fear nor shame, follows, without check, every purpose which a heart dead to all virtuous feeling can suggest. This, the young adventurer has not attained; he finds his want of freedom and self-command on the point of some dangerous enterprize; his tongue faulters when he would cry "Stand;" his hand trembles, and he almost forgets the sad business in which he is engaged. But the veteran has shaken off these slavish fears; he will take your purse, and then calmly demonstrate that he has done you no injury. It is evident this last is more of a free-thinker, and actor too, but certainly not a better man.

How many years have some persons of pregnant genius and unwearied diligence been in learning the art and mystery of free-thinking, and yet could never attain their unhappy purpose, till they had silenced conscience, and extinguished every spark of true virtue!

"What!" you will say then, "are there no virtuous free-thinkers?" Yes; such are all the myriads that people the celestial regions, whose wise and holy thoughts know nothing of the least constraint, flowing in perfect unison with the steady determination of their will, which invariably points unto HIM who is

the origin and end of all, the centre of perfection and happiness. But I need not send you to the skies; such free-thinkers there are on earth; men endued from heaven with a spirit of true freedom; now indeed, in the present imperfect state, clogged in its exertion innumerable ways, which makes them, not seldom, with a degree of impatience, long for the perfect liberty of the sons of GOD. It would not be surprising if some persons should ask, "Pray, sir, what is this new set of free-thinkers you speak of? at least it is new to us; we remember never to have read or heard of them, and should be glad of information." It would be ill manners indeed, not to answer so civil a question; and that I may satisfy, in some measure, such fair inquirers touching this uncommon sect, I shall give a few lineaments of their character, hoping it will invite them, in a sedate hour, to trace it with greater accuracy. They are not a credulous generation, as some would draw them; simple creatures, that believe every word; but, as wise men, they look well to their going: of searching, inquisitive spirits, they try all things, that they may find, and hold fast that which is good: men of impartial minds, who accept not persons in judgment, but hear the small as well as the great, considering, that as the latter are not always wise, so, whatever the world may think, there are wise men, the lustre of whose understanding is hid in the shade of poverty: they burn with a supreme love of truth, insomuch that they will buy it at any rate, and sell it not, being apprized of its inestimable worth, counting it infinitely more precious than rubies, and that nothing is to be compared with it: and what some will hardly credit, they are men of reason, willing to have their principles and practices canvassed with the severest scrutiny, and give a reason for both to every fair inquirer, or honestly confess their errors upon conviction. They would rather own truth in the lowest degradation, than sit with folly and error in the highest dignity; well knowing, that, however the latter may get the lead in their short course through a benighted world, yet that truth finally shall win the race and triumph for ever; and to add only one feature more, (for I intend not a finished picture), they are men humbly sensible of their remaining ignorance and imperfection, patient of instruction and reproof, never satisfied with any present attainments, but still reaching after higher measures of knowledge and virtue.

Let the free-thinkers of this age take up, for a moment, this portrait, and try if they can discern their own likeness.

Ch. Ob.

ORIGINAL LETTER

From the Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES, formerly president of the college of New-Jersey.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I REDEEM a few nocturnal hours to breathe out my benevolent wishes for you, and to assure you of my peculiar regards. Human life is extremely precarious and uncertain; and, perhaps, at your return, I may be above the reach of your correspondence; or, perhaps, your voyage may end on the eternal shore. I, therefore, write to you, dear sir, in the last agonies of friendship, if I may use the expression. If, upon your return, you only hear my worthless name tost from tongue to tongue, and find this system of clay that now breathes, and moves, and writes, mouldering into its native element, you may safely indulge this reflection: "Well, once I had a friend; a friend, whose affection could find room for me in his retired importunities for mercy at the throne of grace, when his own wants were so numerous and great, that they might have engrossed all his concern." Or, if I am doomed to survive you, I shall have the melancholy satisfaction to reflect, "My friend did not live without such assurances of my tender affection as might engage his confidence in my useless friendship."

And now, when I feel the soft emotions of friendship, and speak of the final period of this mortal state, I cannot restrain myself from intermixing some of the solemnities of religion. We shall have an interview beyond the grave, though we should never converse more beneath the skies, in the low language of mortals. But, oh! on what happy, or on what dismal coast shall we meet? On the verdant plains of the celestial paradise, or in the dreary regions of horror and despair? The human mind is incapable of forming a more important inquiry; and if the hurries or amusements of this infant state of things can banish it from our minds, we have forfeited the character of rational creatures; we are as really, and more perniciously mad than any wretch in bedlam, though we are not stigmatized as such by the world, who are seized with the same delirium. The valley of the shadow of death appears frequently gloomy and tremendous to me; but, it is in those unhappy hours, when my views of the glorious method of salvation through a mediator appear in an obscure light, and my complacence in it is wavering or languid; when the fervour of devotion is abated, and my soul is lulled asleep in a carnal security: but my mind cannot rest under this uncertainty: it is too important a matter to make an implicit venture in. Oh! sir, an eternity of consummate happiness! An eternity of the most in-

tolerable misery!—My mind sinks beneath the unwieldy thought, and I cannot finish the sentence! If I am mistaken in this, if I form to myself some easy scheme of religion that may suit the humour of this world well enough, but will not obtain the approbation of the supreme Judge, then my reason is a pernicious superfluity, my very being an eternal curse; *Woe is me, my mother, that thou didst bear me.* But, in those joyful hours, when I can rest my guilty soul on an all-sufficient redeemer with all the humble confidence of a confirmed faith; when I can read the evidences of regenerating grace upon my heart; when I can recollect the solemn transactions between God and my soul, and renew them in the most voluntary dedication of myself, and all I am and have, to him, through the blessed mediator; then immortality is a glorious prospect; the grizzly phantom, death, is disarmed of all its horrors, and, with the inviting mildness of an angel, charms me into its cold embraces. Then the mortal pale, the dying cold, the quivering lips, the falling jaws, and all the grim attendants of the last agony, carry nothing terrible in them.

> "Clasp'd in my heavenly father's arms
> I would resign my fleeting breath;
> And lose my life amid the charms
> Of so divine and blest a death."

Dear, dear sir, I have opened to you some of my sentiments on experimental religion, and, you know, we unhappily differ upon sundry points relating to it. Our differences on many other points, and sundry of them even with respect to this, have but a very remote connexion with everlasting salvation; and, no doubt, multitudes arrive in the same heaven, who are tenacious of different sides. But that thorough change of heart, usually denominated regeneration; that distressing conviction of our undone condition by sin, and utter inability to relieve ourselves by virtue of that strength common to mankind in general, that humble acceptance of Christ as our only Saviour and Lord, by a faith of divine operation, that humbling sense of the corruption of human nature, and eager pursuit and practice of universal holiness, which I have, I believe, mentioned in conversation and my letters, appear to me of absolute necessity.

I should be glad you would read the second and third of Dr. Doddridge's Sermons on Regeneration, which, I think, give a very just and rational account of that important change. I would not venture my soul on a religion short of this for ten thousand worlds, and I am inexpressibly anxious, (pardon the perhaps

needless anxiety of my love,) lest you should fatally mistake here. My anxiety is heightened when I consider your favourite authors. Tillotson's and Sherlock's Works, the Whole Duty of Man, and such authors, are truly valuable in their place, and handle many points to peculiar advantage; but if I know any thing of experimental christianity, they treat of it very superficially, and, I think, in their most obvious sense, tend to mislead us in sundry things of great importance relating to it, not so much by asserting false doctrines, as by omitting sundry branches of it absolutely necessary. I have examined the matter with some care; and I am sure their delineation of christianity is not an exact copy of what I must experience before I can see the Lord: I must indeed come up to their account of it; but I must not rest there; there is a necessity of experiencing something farther than they generally inculcate. The same thing I would inoffensively observe with respect to all the sermons I have heard in Virginia from the established clergy. Hence, by the by, you may see the peculiar safety of my scheme; if their scheme of religion be sufficient, I am as safe as they, since mine includes it; but if it should prove essentially defective, then you see where the advantage lies. This difference is not at all owing to their being of the church of England, for many of that church agree with me; and many Presbyterians with them; but it is owing to their imbibing the modern divinity, which, like a pernicious leaven, has diffused itself among all denominations: and however confidently some assert it, I could not embrace it without wilfully throwing myself into ruin.

You know, sir, what use I would have you make of these hints; and I am confident you will pardon the affectionate solicitude for you which prompts me to them. I speak solemnly, dear sir, solemnly as in the presence of God, and not with the contradictious spirit of a disputant. Of all the systems of practical religion which have come under my examination, I have endeavoured to choose the most sure as the foundation of my hopes; and I should show a guilty and unfriendly indifference about your immortal interests, should I not recommend it to you, and caution you against those that appear insufficient. It matters little to me whether you use the ceremonial peculiarities of the church of England, or not; as I know they have but little concern with experimental religion: but our notions of the substance of vital piety ought to be well examined, and impartially formed; as a mistake here may be of pernicious consequences. But I must desist. May almighty grace prepare you for a glorious immortality! May divine providence be your guardian through the dangers of the boisterous ocean!

May He whose nod the hurricanes and storms
And blustering waves in all their dreadful forms
With calm adoring reverence obey;
May He with friendly vigilance preside
O'er the outrageous winds and boist'rous tide,
And safe through crowds of deaths conduct your dang'rous way!

I commit two letters to your care, one to Dr. Doddridge, and one to Mr. Mauduit. Upon your arrival in London, please to write a few lines along with mine to Dr. Doddridge, informing him where to find you, that he may commit his answer to your care.

And now, dear sir, with affectionate salutations to your family, my whole self wishes you a most hearty farewell.

I am your most affectionate friend,

SAMUEL DAVIES.

September 12, 1751.

The following letter from the late Rev. J. GRIER, deceased, to his brother, then lately recovered from a dangerous illness, has been handed us for publication.

VERY DEAR BROTHER,

I HAVE heard you were sick, apparently near unto death, but God has had mercy upon you, and not upon you only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

I am nearly reconciled in my mind to afflictive dispensations; although flesh and sense are apt to murmur and rebel. It is indeed no longer strange or a matter of wonder to me, that the heirs of the inheritance which is incorruptible are often chastened of the Lord. They do need it; corruption needs it; grace needs it; at least the mixed state of grace and corruption in which we yet are, does so. These visitations are among the treasures of the covenant which is ordered in all things; they flow from it. Covenant love prompts to send them, Rev. iii. 19. Covenant faithfulness requires them, Psalm cxix. 75. For my own part, I am not more fully assured that there is a gracious and faithful God in heaven, than I am that all the troubles, trials and changes, with which he exercises his people, are for their real good, their eternal advantage; and that they shall, under *His* eye and influence, promote grace now, and glory hereafter. One cause, you know, of carnal security to many, is, the absence of these things, Psalm lv. 19. The lot of believers is a changing lot. The change too is *always* from one trial to another; *often* from one trouble to another. Herein God deals with them as men do with fermented liquors; he empties

them from vessel to vessel, that a part of their dregs may be left behind every time they are drawn off, Jer. xlviii. 11. And as liquors profit by this process, so do christians: they are hereby made more and more partakers of the divine holiness.

It is indeed true, that every trial, change, &c. requires a particular influence of divine grace to assist us in the due improvement of it: but it is also true, that this grace is at hand; is ready for us; and that we may have it for the asking. (See Luke xi. 9, 10. and the further confirmed and sweetly amplified verses, 11, 12, 13.) Christ's intercession for us, his exaltation for us, conjoined with God's faithful promise to us, leaves no room to doubt of this, Heb. iv. 16. Hence, says the apostle, 1 John, v. 14, 15, we must seek for grace to improve all God's visitations of whatever kind they be; must endeavour to improve them to their proper end; to hear the voice of God in them; to see and understand what he means. Our own careful endeavour, I say, is indispensably necessary to our profiting under providential visitations; they cannot affect us rationally without it; careful consideration; earnest prayer; desires to know the mind of God; a giving up of ourselves to the guidance of his word, providence and spirit; striving to be more and more hearty and unreserved in this surrender daily. There is a supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ spoken of, Phil. i. 19; which supply is peculiarly needful in such seasons as we are now speaking of; and it seems to be there mentioned with particular reference to such persons. The word signifies a present additional supply to a former allowance; there is a daily allowance for our daily, ordinary work; but besides this there is a special addition made to this allowance; a special supply of the Spirit given according to the present necessity. Verily we are not straitened in God, but in our own hearts; liberal provision is made for us in every circumstance, but our unbelief, and want of spiritual appetite, spoils all! Psalm lxxxi. 10, Phil. iv. 19. Divine grace in the soul is a spark or coal which, though it shall never be extinguished, yet may be so covered over as scarcely to appear. Now, by the various providences whereby believers are exercised, God does, by grace in their souls, as men do by the fire that is covered with ashes, *stir it up:* so the word signifies, 2 Tim. i. 6. Covered fire affords little light, little heat, little comfort or benefit to the owner or others: yet light, heat, &c. are its natural properties; uncover it, stir it up, add suitable fuel, and then its nature, properties, and effects appear to all. Thus God stirs up latent grace: his supplies of the Spirit concur with his providences, and excite us to concur also, and thus the peaceable fruits

of righteousness are brought forth; thus grace is revived, increased, and made both visible and useful to oursevels and others. And is it not worth while to endure present chastenings, if they be the happy end and issue of it? Dear brother, the end of all things is at hand; let us therefore watch and be sober. As long as we live we are debtors, not, I am sure, to the world or the flesh; but we are debtors to Christ, to our souls, our families, and our flocks. The night is coming on when we cannot work. Oh that this consideration may urge us on to improve the day time as it did our kind master, John ix. 4. He laboured with unwearied diligence for us; a return of honest diligence is due on our part, out of gratitude to him. The demands which the souls of our families have upon us are urgent, *very urgent;* so also with respect to our people; we have need of daily special supplies from God, for we have daily, important work to do!

We are liable to be grossly imposed upon from different quarters; two things of this sort now appear to my mind clearly. Specious pleas from the world to call our attention to its cares, specially some degree of necessity; even this call must be listened to with caution; the necessity may not be as urgent as is suggested. The other thing is, we are always present with our families, and are too ready to admit that we shall be present with them, and have opportunity of instructing them at any time: this is apt to make the mind too remiss in improving the present hour. The present *only* is our time; the next week they may be gone from us, or we from them: on this uncertainty is grounded that pressing exhortation: "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, *do it with thy might*," &c. That your spared life may be more heartily devoted to the service of Christ in his gospel, and that you and your's may find mercy from him in that day, is the prayer of your affectionate brother,

J. GRIER.

Deep Run, 9th April, 1791.

EXPOSITION.

OF GENESIS, CHAPTER XX. ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH.

ABRAHAM, on the occasion of the destruction of Sodom, supposed the number of righteous men in it to be much greater than it was. "Peradventure," said he, "there be fifty righteous in the city," and it proved that there were not ten. On his coming to Gerar, he erred on the contrary side; for he fancied that there

was neither religion nor morality in the place. "Surely," thought he, "the fear of God is not in this place." Some men fancy that they know, as it were, by intuition, who is religious and who is not; and that they are in possession of the precise number of the pious in every place to which they come. Such men are wiser than Abraham, the father of the faithful, for he twice erred in respect to this very point. Let us be slow and modest in judging, and let us be charitable to such as may not be altogether of our party.

Abraham's error, on the occasion of his coming to Gerar, tended to draw him into a sin. He thought that Abimelech, the king of Gerar, being wicked, and his people wicked, they would kill him without scruple, with the view of taking to themselves Sarah his wife, if they should know that she was his wife. He, therefore, declares that she was his sister. Now it was very true that she was his sister, that is to say, his half-sister; so that, literally speaking, no lie was told. He, however, intended, by saying that she was his sister, to convey an idea that she was his sister in such a sense as not to be capable of being his wife. Was Abraham, therefore, free from sin in this matter? Certainly not; for the evil of a lie consists in the deceit of it. That man tells a lie, whatever his words may be, who conveys an impression to the hearer, which the speaker intends that the hearer shall understand in a way that is contrary to fact; or, to put the observation into fewer words, that man tells a lie who speaks in order to deceive; and there are a thousand ways in which we may contrive to tell no literal lie, and yet may tell one in substance, and may have all the benefit, as well as all the sin, of having uttered a falsehood; let us not then deceive or prevaricate; let us not give a false colour to facts, nor try to put any thing in an unfair light; but let us aim to have, in every respect, "the testimony of our consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have our conversation in the world."

Abraham, it is worthy of remark, did not profit by his deceit. It was worldly policy which led him to it. He did not dare to act in a direct manner, trusting God with the consequences; but his faith failed, as it is once said to have done in a former case, and he trusted for his safety to his own crooked policy. Now the very artifice which he used, in order to secure his life, was the occasion of his wife's falling into a danger, which she would not have incurred if he had been open and simple in his conduct. It also appeared, that his own life would have been in no danger by his speaking the truth, since the men of Gerar were not so void of

the fear of God as he imagined. God, nevertheless, was pleased mercifully to interpose in favour of his erring servant, by appearing to Abimelech in a dream. Abimelech is angry with Abraham for his deceit, and Abraham the prophet is put to shame before this stranger. The evil, however, is repaired, through God's goodness; and Abraham, being had in honour by these foreigners among whom he sojourns, receives numerous presents at their hands.

Let us take occasion from this error of Abraham to notice still more particularly a like fault in some persons of this day, who possibly, nevertheless, may, like Abraham, be justly termed believers. They have set out perhaps, like Abraham, in the real exercise of faith; they have committed their bodies, their souls, and all their interests to God; and though it is through faith that they have been enabled to begin to walk with God, yet their faith sometimes evidently fails them by the way. In particular, it is apt to fail them, when they come into the company of the wicked, or rather of those whom they suppose to be so. "Surely," say they, "the fear of God is not in this place. I must therefore," they add, "take good care of my interest, now that I am among unbelieving people: I suspect them of every thing that is bad; I must, therefore, in some measure, treat them in their own way; I must use a little craft with these heathens; I will indeed tell them no lie," perhaps they say, "but I must stretch a point in the present case; I must contrive a little to mislead them; I will save my own conscience, at the same time, by some words of a double meaning, which I will understand in one way, and they in another. It is not, therefore, a lie that I will tell; or, at the worst, it is an excusable one. It is necessary that I should thus defend myself from the evil which, I fear, they will otherwise bring upon me."

But this is not faith. This is walking in unbelief; and though our end should be good, yet if our means are crooked, the good end will not justify the bad means. Abraham's end was sufficiently good. It was very fair and right that he should try to save his own life, but it was not proper that he should resort to crooked means; and the crooked method which he took, in truth, did not tend to save it. Nay, we scruple not to say, that though our end should be the promotion of the gospel, yet if we take crooked means of promoting it, we do but hinder the cause which we mean to serve, and disgrace it in the eyes of unbelievers. Abraham himself might have pleaded, that the cause of religion moved him to use deceit; for the Messiah, who was not yet born, was to spring

from him, and if Abraham were to be killed, "how," he might be tempted to say, "will the promise be fulfilled?" Afterwards, however, he grew stronger in faith; for at God's command he offered up even his son Isaac, accounting that God would sooner bring him again to life than fail of his promise.

Let us then fear to expose ourselves to the just censure, even of those whom we deem unbelievers. How might the men of Gerar, and Abimelech their king, have exposed, if they had thought fit, the deceitfulness of the prophet, and have taken occasion to revile both him and his religion! and thus, how justly may the men of the world expose and revile us, if they see us descending to their own crooked acts, in order to further our cause!

Let it, however, be here particularly noticed, that the men of Gerar did not revile Abraham, but, on the contrary, respected him, notwithstanding his lamentable infirmity; and this, perhaps, is one of the proofs of their having had more of the fear of God than Abraham had the charity to suppose. He stood indebted for favour and protection to the very people whom he had just before condemned without distinction.

Let us learn then, on the one hand, from the evil example of Abraham, to fear all uncharitableness; and, at the same time let us learn also, on the other, from the good example of Abimelech, not to condemn the servants of God, for an occasional failure of faith, into which they may have fallen. Let us throw a veil of charity over their faults; and, if some good men are, like Abraham, uncharitable towards us, and too ready to term us unbelievers, let us prove, like Abimelech, by our courtesy and kindness to the very men who have been over suspicious of us, that we are not so void of the fear of God as they may have supposed.

Ch. Ob.

ECCLESIASTES xii. 1—7.

A VIEW of the different materials of which man is composed, may teach us to form a proper estimate of him. He stands between the two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, and partakes of both. His body is material, but its inhabitant descends from another system. His soul, like the world from which it comes, is immortal; but his body, like the world to which it belongs, is frail and perishable. From its birth it contains in it the seeds and principles of dissolution, toward which it tends every day and hour, by the very means that nourish and maintain it, and which no art can protract, beyond a certain term. In spite of precaution

and medicine, " the evil days will come, and the years draw nigh, when he shall say, I have no pleasure in them." Pains and sorrows will succeed each other, as " the clouds return after the rain;" blackening the face of heaven, and darkening the sources of light and joy. The hands, those once active and vigorous " keepers of the house," grown paralytic, shall " tremble;" and " the strong men," those firm and able columns, which supported it, shall " bow themselves," and sink under the weight; the external " grinders" of the food, the teeth, " shall cease, because they are few," and the work of mastication shall be imperfectly performed. Dim suffusion shall veil the organs of sight, " they that look out of the windows shall be darkened." " The doors," or valves, " shall be shut in the streets," or alleys of the body, when the digestive powers are weakened, and the sound of the " internal grinding is low." Sleep, if it light upon the eyelids of age, will quickly remove again, and " he will rise up" at the time when the first " voice of the bird proclaims the approach of the morning. All the daughters of music shall be brought low;" he will hear no more the voice of singing men, and singing women. Timidity and distrust will predominate, and he will be alarmed at every thing; " he shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way." As the early " almond tree," when it flourishes in full blossom, his hoary head shall be conspicuous in the congregation, the sure prognostic not of spring, alas, but of winter; he who like " the grasshopper," in the season of youth was so sprightly in his motions, now scarce able to crawl upon the earth, " shall be a burden" to himself, and the organs of sense being vitiated and impaired, " desire" and appetite " shall fail." The spinal marrow, that " silver cord," with infinite ramifications of the nerves, thence derived, will be relaxed and lose its tone; " and the golden bowl," the receptacle of the brain, from which it proceeds, " shall be broken." The vessel by which, as a " pitcher," the blood is carried back to the heart for a fresh supply, shall be broken at the fountain, and the wheel, or instrument of circulation, which throws it forth again to the extremities of the body, shall be broken at the cistern. When this highly finished piece of mechanism shall be thus disjointed and dissolved, " then shall the dust," of which it was formed, " return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." Learn we from hence, to bestow on each part of our composition that proportion of time and attention, which, upon a due consideration of its nature and importance, it shall appear to claim at our hands.

Bishop Horn.

REASONS OF REPOSE.

[*Concluded from page* 543.]

But notwithstanding the prevalence of this kingdom of darkness, I see also a *kingdom of heaven*, not only *foretold*, but actually *set up*, in this world. Time which has swept away in their turn other ancient governments has, from the days of Abel the righteous to this day, witnessed a righteous and permanent kingdom established in the hearts of the faithful: one exactly of the same nature and producing the same holy effects, in whatever age or nation it has been set up. Nothing fundamental has ever been changed in it; and its new form under Christ is but the flower or perfection of the whole dispensation. Even now may we say, *go and tell* every serious inquirer that, in this kingdom the morally *blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them; and blessed is he who shall not be offended* at the author and the means. Nor does it need a moment's consideration to determine whether these *moral* miracles, wrought on the immortal spirit of man, be not far more important than those *physical* ones which were once wrought on his perishing body.

I feel no disposition to stumble at the mysteries of revelation till I forget myself. He who ventures beyond his depth must be drowned. There are some truths in my own affairs which, however I state them to my children, must appear to them strange and incredible. Could they be presented to the intellect of a fly, they must appear much more so. There is, however, some proportion between the intellect of a man and that of a fly; but no proportion at all between that which is *finite*, and that which is *infinite*. In viewing therefore the scheme of redemption, I seem like one viewing a vast and complicated machine of exquisite contrivance; what I comprehend of it is wonderful; what I do not, is perhaps more so still.

I have repeated proof that in venturing into the presumptuous path of the first *Adam*, I soon lose myself in disorder and darkness; but in following the lowly footsteps of the second *Adam*, I find the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord, *in which I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel.* Here I feel, that if no one besides myself could be a witness of the fulfilment of this promise, I must be as false as hell if I did not acknowledge the accomplishment of it in my own state and heart.

Whatsoever doth make manifest is light, but we have a conviction in our breasts amounting to moral certainty, that it is only by the light of revelation we have been enabled to justly appreciate *other* things, and discern their true colour, worth, and importance. Instructed by this, we perceive, that if modern moralists reason better than their pagan forefathers, it is because they were born under a brighter day, and borrow it from those very assistances which their depravity often employs against it. We cannot but recollect that when our hearts became humble, the light of revelation, like that of the sun, brought its own evidence with it, insomuch that when Christ spake to us by his word, he seemed to say to us, as he once said to the man whose eyes he opened, "*I that speak to thee am He.*"

The instruction which a christian receives from this great teacher makes all he sees *without*, and feels *within* both natural and accountable; and his teacher's counsel also shows him WHAT TO DO in the case. But without such help, he feels like one driven out to sea without rudder or compass, and who for any thing he knows to the contrary, may be dashed to pieces in a moment.

Necessity felt, and help received, become an argument at hand with christians in every station. Thus the believing poor feel the use and worth of the scriptures, as an illiterate mariner feels the use and worth of his compass. The mariner, perhaps, has neither curiosity nor capacity enough to inquire why his needle takes a polar direction; or, what the learned have to say on its observed variations in different parts of the globe. He knows nothing of the laws of magnetism; why iron and not lead should be the recipient of it; when it was discovered; by whom; or to what variety of purposes it may be applied. But this man knows, illiterate as he is, that it is by this needle only that he finds his way through a trackless ocean; he knows, that by this alone he has escaped many dangers, and obtained many deliverances; he knows he can proceed safely only as he is directed by it; or take rest only as he attends to it; and that it will bring him home to his family and friends at last. Thus the poor take the benefit of revelation though they are not able accurately to maintain theories, nor answer questions respecting it as a scholar might.

The value of a thing is sometimes best discovered by observing the want of it. When I have beheld the desperate malignity of an unbeliever whom I have visited in his dying moments, and seen him spurn at the only help and kindness that could be afforded him in such circumstances; or when I have laboured to

convince a silly young creature, intoxicated with vanity, sunk in sensuality, deaf to counsel, and plunging into ruin: when, I say, I have looked on such men, could I doubt for a moment as to what a reception of the gospel would do for them? I stand assured that it would pluck a brand from the burning; it would bring a madman to his senses; it would change a devil into an angel. Can I doubt after such an assurance, whether this same gospel be true, and the appointed remedy of God?

We cannot avoid perceiving a distinct class of men who, from the beginning of time, were taught and disposed to serve the living and true God; we cannot help marking the *identity* of their character, the *superiority* of their views, their zeal for truth, and daily anxiety to improve under its direction. Nor can we avoid perceiving the rest of mankind, drowned in cares or pleasures, either casting off all fear of God, or becoming the blind dupes of some contemptible superstition. Now can we hesitate a moment to which of these two divisions of mankind we should join ourselves?

As a foolish youth, who knows not how to prize the privileges of his father's house, care, and counsel, seeks the friendship of some dangerous stranger; thus, upon taking umbrage at something met with in the church, I have petulantly walked into the world for relief. Happy for me! what I met there soon convinced me that I must make the best of my way back again. I found hypocrisy and farce in the church; in the world I found nothing else; and pure truth and solid consolation only in the Bible.

Happy also for us, if by *any means*, we are brought to receive the truth in time. Upon my first coming into our neighbourhood, one who possessed a considerable estate in it, was not satisfied with jocosely expressing his own infidelity, but thought he complimented me by insinuating, that, secretly, I was of his sentiment. A mortification in his bowels, soon after, made him serious, and *then* he discovered his fatal mistake. He sent for me in the greatest anxiety, but too late for conversation. The agony, however, of his mind when dying reminded me of that observation, "*Hell is truth seen too late.*"

And is this all the god of this world can give his servants for believing his lie? One thing more, perhaps, he may add, that is the *opiate* of a stupid conscience to make them die quietly. But I cannot be content with such wages. Annihilation, which is the unbeliever's *best* hope, is the christian's *worst* fear. He alone stands a candidate for an enduring *substance;* the Bible alone proposes it; and what has the world to offer in its sophistries or

satisfactions which should dissuade him one moment from thus standing?

On the other hand, I see a wild fanatic mangling the scriptures till some are ready to call them in question: but I see no question arise from hence. Had this deluded creature ceased to follow his imagination, and trod the humble and practical path of his guide, he would have ceased to be a fanatic. Nor am I a whit more stumbled at the hypocrite; I see him, like Simon Magus paying homage to an excellence, but have *no part nor lot in the matter.* Like a spurious miracle, he derives all his credit from those that are true; as a counterfeit coin or note would deceive none, if true ones had never existed. "*Tell me not,*" said your old friend Mrs. —— to her relation, "*how many hypocrites you find in the church; I tell you I know I am not one myself, and that is enough for me.*"

In this way, has God enabled me hitherto to examine my foundation. Or if I may be allowed at the conclusion to change the metaphor, I stand like one who for a long time had been imposed upon by toys and tinsel, but at length feels satisfied that he has found *gold.* Some, indeed, try to persuade me that I am still imposed upon, and that what I take for gold is but base metal. I therefore proceed to prove my gold by every method of trial I can devise. I put it into the *scale;* I try it in the *fire;* I bring it to the *touchstone;* I place it under the *hammer;* and find it still *pure gold.* After all this, shall I regard their cry who have never *thus* tried it; and whose fears and lusts oppose the trial?

At your request, I have now put down the substance of my unconnected remarks; and since in that form they afforded you relief in *discourse*, I have avoided giving them a more regular one on *paper.* I have also been sparing of practical inferences from the truths thus established; as I need not demonstrate to you, what *Reasons of Action* must necessarily arise from these *Reasons of Repose.* You are also fully aware that the truth before us must be infinitely momentous or nothing. That it cannot be *nothing*, we have full proof in our own breasts; infinitely momentous therefore it must remain, and such may we ever feel it!

With a mind fully made up on the subject, *all the days of my appointed time* I hope to *wait till my change come.* Such a change we all know must soon take place in every one of us; but a strange infatuation leads fallen man (like one walking in his sleep towards a precipice) to plunge into the abyss before him without so much as inquiring where he is going, or how he may go safely. On the contrary, as one *awake*, I would anticipate the change before it

takes place; I would provide against it; I would descend to the grave taking hold simply and entirely of that almighty hand stretched out for my help; crying, as I descend "*Remember the Word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*"

ANECDOTE.

THE progress of the great king, Alp Arslan, was retarded by the governor of Berzem; and Joseph, the Carizmian, presumed to defend his fortress against the powers of the East. When he was produced a captive in the royal tent, the sultan, instead of praising his valour, severely reproached his obstinate folly, and the insolent replies of the rebel provoked a sentence, that he should be fastened to four stakes and left to expire in that painful situation. At this command the desperate Carizmian, drawing a dagger, rushed headlong towards the throne: the guards raised their battle axes; their zeal was checked by Alp Arslan, the most skilful archer of the age; he drew his bow, but his foot slipped, the arrow glanced aside, and he received in his breast the dagger of Joseph, who was instantly cut in pieces. The wound was mortal, and the Turkish prince bequeathed a dying admonition to the pride of kings. "In my youth," said Alp Arslan, "I was advised by a sage to humble myself before God, to distrust my own strength, and never to despise the most contemptible enemy. I have neglected these lessons; and my neglect has been deservedly punished. Yesterday from an eminence I beheld the numbers, the discipline, and the spirit of my armies; the earth seemed to tremble under my feet, and I said in my heart, surely thou art the king of the world, the greatest and most invincible of warriors. These armies are no longer mine; and in the confidence of my personal strength, I now fall into the hand of an assassin." Alp Arslan possessed the virtues of a Turk and a Musselman; his voice and stature commanded the reverence of mankind; his face was shaded with long whiskers, and his ample turban was fashioned in the shape of a crown. The remains of the sultan were deposited in the tomb of the Seljukian dynasty, and the passenger might read and meditate this useful inscription: "O ye who have seen the glory of Alp Arslan, exalted to the heavens, repair to Maru, and you will behold it buried in the dust!" The annihilation of the inscription, and the tomb itself, more forcibly proclaims the instability of human greatness. *Translated from the Bibliotheque Orientale of D'Herbelot, in Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Vol. x. p. 362.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

A brief account of the proceedings of the Committee, appointed in the year 1795, by the yearly meeting of Friends of Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, &c. for promoting the improvement and gradual civilization of the Indian natives.

[*Concluded from page 547.*]

" Brothers,

" We wish you to speak your minds to us quite plain, and if there is any thing which does not feel easy to you, that you will tell it to us.

" Brothers, we have seen the speech made by you, at one of your late councils, to our Friends, by which we understand you leave them at full liberty to move up the river to settle on land joining to yours.

" Brothers, since we came here we have been viewing the land, and think if we can purchase a piece on Tunesassah creek, joining to yours, it will be a suitable place for our Friends to settle upon; they will then still be among your settlements.

" Brothers, when our Friends first came to settle among you, we told you the tools then brought, should be for your use, to be lent among such of you as wanted to use them; they have been so lent, and we have sent others for our Friends to use: when our friends remove, such of the first parcel of the tools as remain with them will be left with your chiefs to be lent out for the good of the nation.

" Brothers, we have lent some blacksmith's tools to the smith who resides at the upper town, the others our Friends take with them; but the smith who lives here may make use of them; the two smiths we hope are now able to do nearly all the smith work you will want.

" Brothers, if our Friends get a house put up before winter, suitable for their accommodation, they will remove from the one they now live in. The barn and some of the land they may want another summer, as perhaps they cannot get land enough cleared to raise grain and hay for their cattle; you will agree among yourselves which of you shall live here when our Friends remove.

" Brothers, when our Friends remove they will continue to give you assistance and instruction when they can, if they think you stand in need of it.

" Brothers, we understand by your speech to our Friends, that you want them to bring on tools and cloth to sell.

" Brothers, we do not want to keep a store of goods among you: we think it will be best not, but we intend to send a few scythes, sickles, augers, and some such tools, for our Friends to sell to such of you as may want to buy; but if any of your people buy from them, and then sell to white people, they are not to sell any more to such as do so.

" Brothers, we again repeat it, we wish you to speak your minds freely to us, and if there is any thing which you and we do not understand alike, that you will tell us, as it is our wish to comply with all our engagements."

After consulting with the other Indians, Cornplanter replied:

" Brothers,

" Your speech is good, containing the same language Friends have always spoken to us. We know the time talked of for your young men to live among us has passed by, and nothing been said on either side; and perhaps that is the reason why you want to purchase a piece of land joining to us. Your young men may live where they now do as long as you please, and if you cannot purchase, we hope they will continue to live where they now do.

" Brothers, when your Friends first came, and for a long time after, the white people told us, " Keep a good watch on them Quakers, they are a cunning designing people, and under pretence of doing something for you, want to get a hold upon you, to make an advantage of you some way or other." But of late, finding that all was straight and no advantage attempted to be taken, they had left off talking about it.

" Brothers, your young men and us have now lived together several years as brothers; when your young men came, the Indians were very ignorant, but now we are just beginning to learn; your young men do not talk much to us, but when they do, they speak what is good, and have been very helpful in keeping us from using spirituous liquors; as has also my brother.

" Brothers, you have desired us to agree among ourselves who shall live in this house, as your young men expect to leave it before winter, but we do not think it right to fix on any one yet, as if you cannot get a piece of land your Friends will want it; and if you do buy a piece, they may not get a house up fit for them to live in before winter, and then they would want it.

" Brothers, you have also mentioned

that you should leave all the buildings, fences, &c. here for us to occupy this farm, except that your Friends would want the barn and some of the land to get fodder and raise grain next summer, which is all very agreeable to us, but it is hard work to cut down so many trees and clear land to raise hay and grain, therefore they may want it longer than next summer, and if they do, they are welcome to work it as long as they think they have occasion for it; so it will be time enough to make choice of some one to occupy this house, farm, &c. when your young men are comfortably fixed on the place you intend them to remove to, if you can get it.

"Brothers, we will appoint some of our people to receive the tools and collect such as are lent; and have charge in future of lending them.

"Brothers, it is true in our speech to your young men, we requested them to bring cloth, tools, &c. to sell; but we think you have come to a wise conclusion not to keep a store among us, as some dispute or difficulty might arise, if a store was kept, between your young men and our people. We are obliged to you for your intention of sending a few scythes, augers, &c. to sell to such of our people as want to buy; and are pleased our people are not to sell such things again to the white people.

"Brothers, we are well satisfied with your conduct towards us, you have always done what you promised."

An old chief then said a few words to the following import:

"Brothers,

"You promised to endeavour to send a smith among us. After some time you did send a smith, but he staid only a short time, and two or three of our young men who began to learn the business, are not fully learned: now you have sent on a smith the best we have ever seen, he knows how to make all things we want, but he has been only a little while with us, and now says he is going away: we desire he may stay all winter, and then we think our own smiths in that time, with his instruction, will be able to do our work, and now they cannot."

To this the Committee replied, that the Friend had a wife and a family at home, who required his attention, therefore they could not press him to stay, as he had remained with them as long as he intended when he left home.

Friends believed the continued sobriety of the natives, and their improvement in habits of industry, afforded encouragement to persevere in this benevolent work. Several families having settled themselves about two miles higher up the river than where they used to reside, and cleared and fenced about sixty acres of good land; in others places their industry was noticed. The road the Indians have opened for about twenty-two miles is a great work for them; it affords a much better communication from the lower to the upper settlements, by land, than they used to have.

From thence Friends went to Catarogus, where they were cordially received by the chiefs, and had the satisfaction of noticing very great improvements; several of them had built, and were building good houses, on a rich flat, about a mile from their old village; their crop of corn was large, and their stock of cattle increased; and generally speaking, they had become a sober people, most of them having for a long time refrained from the use of whiskey and other strong drink.

The following is an extract from the speeches at a council held with them.

The chief Sachem said, when they wanted advice on any matters of importance, they applied to our Friends on the Alleghany; that they always found their advice very good, and when they followed what Friends recommended, it answered their expectation.

The chief warrior afterwards spoke and adverted to our kindness in supplying them with some useful articles which they stood in need of, and for which they were very thankful. Now they had several requests to make and hoped we would attend to them; the first was for a smith's bellows, anvil, vice, &c. and some iron; then one of their people, now living on the Alleghany river, who had there learned to be a blacksmith, would come home and work for them: they were beginning to farm a little, and found their tools often wanted repairs, and when they went to Buffaloe, which was a long journey, to get any thing mended, they had sometimes to wait two or three days before they could get the little they wanted done, as the smith did the work for the people he lived among before theirs; and to go to Alleghany was further; they also wanted another plough. We had supplied them with one which was very useful, and made some of their land produce much better than before they had it: in the spring many wanted it and all could not have it, therefore some said they had no good of the

Quakers' present, but if we would give them another set of plough irons, they could be nearly all accommodated.

We had helped them to a pair of oxen, and they had bought another themselves, and we might think as they had an annuity they might help themselves to many things, but their annuity would not near clothe them; and in buying their oxen, &c. their women and children had gone more naked than they wished; now they had got over it. Formerly they could by hunting supply themselves with meat and clothing, but white people were settling so all round them, the game was getting scarce, and they were now endeavouring to farm the little land they had left, and hoped they should live more comfortably, but were so poor they stood in need of help; therefore wished us to give them another pair of oxen, and then they could break up some of their land which had not been broken, and make their farms larger, which they wanted to do.

They were informed their requests for the smith's tools and plough irons would be complied with; and when the tools came on, if the smith belonging to their tribe would work for them, Friends on the Alleghany would give them some iron. The oxen they could buy themselves, for they must learn to help themselves; some further advice adapted to their situation was offered, and appeared to be well received.

In the evening when Friends were sitting with the chief warrior, he said he wished to ask them a question, but was almost afraid; they desired him to speak, and they would give him such information as they were able: it was, Do the Quakers keep any slaves? he was told they did not: he said he was very glad to hear it, for if they had kept any, he could not think so well of them as he now did. That he had been at the city of Washington last winter, on business of the nation, and found many white people kept blacks in slavery, and used them no better than horses.

Friends visited the Senecas at Buffaloe creek, and found a sawmill just finished, for which we had supplied them with the irons: a visit was also made to the Tonewantas. At both places, and particularly the latter, many had left off the use of whiskey and other strong drink, and were improving in habits of industry.

A contract was entered into for the land on Tunesassah creek, and Friends at Genesangohta made a temporary house, and removed there before winter.

By a letter from one of the Friends dated 4th month 21st, 1804, we are informed the Indians are generally removed from the lower town, and settling higher up the river, several of them not far from Tunesassah; this removal may put them to some inconvenience the present year, but will probably prove eventually much to their advantage, especially those who have fixed themselves detached from their little towns.

As the Indians had experienced difficulty in getting their little crops of wheat ground, there being no mill near them, after the consent of the Yearly Meeting was obtained, measures were taken to have a grist and sawmill erected at Tunesassah; and the Friend who had been so acceptably with the Indians the year before, offered to devote a further portion of his time amongst them to make the iron work for the mills, and instruct the Indian blacksmiths more perfectly in the business; he remained with them during the summer and fall, and by a letter received from our Friends there, dated 11th month 7th, we are informed that the sawmill is in operation and promises well, and the grist mill is expected to be finished in a few weeks; and a house is building for the comfortable accommodation of a family. A Friend and his wife, if she have the aid of one or two female companions, it is believed may be very usefully employed in instructing the Indian women in various branches of domestic economy, with which they are now much unacquainted, and to which until lately they had not leisure to give much attention: as the men become more of farmers, the women have less drudgery to perform, and unless their improvement is encouraged and promoted, it may retard the progress of both.

The following are extracted from letters, lately received, dated 2d month 10th, and 3d month 3d, 14th, 15th.

"Neither of the mills are completely finished owing to the coldness of the season, yet both so as to do business. The Indians have had considerable grinding done, and appear highly pleased to see the grain reduced to meal so much quicker than pounding it in their wooden mortars; a pretty ingenious Indian man, after having a grist of wheat of his own raising ground and bolted, said with animation, "I think this will make the Indians see day light."

"It is pleasing to find a disposition for improvement continues to prevail amongst the younger class of Indians; divers have now considerable of corn to sell; they often express the satisfaction

they feel in seeing the fruits of their own industry, and frequently observe that when they followed drinking whiskey they could hardly clothe themselves, but by industry they now find their substance begins to increase.

"The continued resolution of these Indians against the use of spirituous liquors, conduces much to the introduction and increase of civilized habits, and it is obvious that it has an improving effect on the other settlements of the Seneca nation.

"They often come to see us, and appear well satisfied with what is doing; our intercourse with them here is much more satisfactory than when we lived at the old place, and not subject to the embarrassment we are frequently under when there. The change I have no doubt will be found advantageous in many respects.

"The late heavy rains, together with the melting of the snow, have produced the greatest flood in the Alleghany and adjacent streams, that has ever been known by any of the natives; our mills have not suffered any injury, being quite safe from high water; several rods of the race bank is carried away, and the dam something injured. The Indians have lost most if not quite all their fences; it is very satisfactory to find that instead of being discouraged by their losses, they have joined together in companies very spiritedly, and have already got a great many rails made."

Signed by direction, and on behalf of the Committee.

THOMAS WISTAR, Clerk.

Philadelphia, 4th month 11th, 1805.

THE fourteenth number of the Periodical Accounts of the English Baptist Missionary Society has lately made its appearance. The information which it contains, relative to the progress of the mission in Bengal, reaches to the month of April, 1804. The missionaries continued to make excursions to different parts of the country, to preach, and to distribute tracts, and copies of the Scriptures, as opportunity was afforded them. They did not expect any great immediate benefit to result from these labours; though they hoped that considerable advantage might be produced by them at some future period. They represent the fear of loosing cast, and incurring obloquy and reproach, as operating more powerfully to prevent the Hindoos from embracing christianity than any attachment which they now have to idolatry. Some of the Hindoo converts had lately conducted themselves in a very unbecoming manner, a circumstance which naturally proved very discouraging. During the month of April, however, five Hindoos, one of them a young brahman, had been baptized. Two of the Hindoo converts, Petumber Singho, and Kristno, together with a Mr. Fernandez, a Portuguese, had been ordained to the work of the ministry. The Bengalee school at Serampore had had much to struggle with from the prejudices of the natives, but it still contained twenty-four children. The missionaries had printed two tracts in Hindostannee, and had begun a new edition of the New Testament in Bengalee. The Old Testament in Bengalee was also going forward. They were besides engaged in a translation of the New Testament into Hindostannee and Persian. The former was nearly finished: the latter had advanced but slowly. They had framed a plan for extending the sphere of their efforts even beyond the limits of the province of Bengal, by placing missionaries in different centrical stations which should be subordinate to the principal station at Serampore; and they only wanted a supply of missionaries to enable them to carry their plan into effect. They likewise contemplated the translation of the scriptures into all the languages of the East, a work for which their situation is stated to afford peculiar facilities.

Extract of a Letter from the Malabar Coast.

"THERE are some small congregations in different parts of this coast, calling themselves Roman Catholic, which were established by the Portugueze, while they had possession of the country. But the Portugueze, in the hope of reconciling the natives to their mode of worship, have assimilated the disgusting parade of their own ritual, to the idolatrous worship which generally prevailed. You may therefore conceive what a strange scene their churches must exhibit. I went one day to one of them. They had a horrid bleeding figure nailed upon a cross, representing Christ crucified. Whenever a curtain, which concealed the figure, was drawn up, the poor creatures began tearing their hair and beating their breasts, and screaming in the most hideous manner. On the curtain being dropped, the priest, a native, began to address the people in the Portugueze and Malabar languages alternately; but they seemed all inattention till the curtain

was drawn up a second time, when they began to behave in the same extravagant manner as before. They seem to have no idea whatever of true religion, and, I think, are fully as much to be pitied as those who still worship their Hindoo idols."

Several missionaries have lately been sent from England by the London missionary society, with the view of establishing a mission on the coast of Coromandel, and, if practicable, in the Mysore country.

A society has lately been instituted in London, intitled The Refuge for the Destitute. The object which this society has in view is to provide places of refuge for persons discharged from prison, or the hulks, unfortunate and deserted females, and others, who from loss of character, or extreme indigence, cannot procure an honest maintenance, *though willing to work*. It is intended, with a due regard to the separate support and employment of the male and female objects of this institution, to pay the most particular attention to the improvement of their morals, and to afford them an opportunity of pursuing, or of learning, various trades and occupations. After they have acquired such habits of religion and industry, as may render them useful members of society, proper situations will be sought for them, and rewards bestowed on those who persevere in good conduct.

When it is considered that thousands in that metropolis subsist by dishonest practices, whilst some, it is much to be feared, perish from want, before parochial relief can be obtained, an undertaking tending to remove such evils, we trust, will not fail to experience the most general patronage and support.

At the last general meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, a report of the committee was read, and has since been printed, which contains much interesting information.

The knowledge of the establishment of this society has been diffused, not only through the united kingdoms, but over the continent of Europe, and has produced the happiest effects. In Ireland the most favourable reception was given to the plan; and, in Scotland, the synod of Glasgow and Air were so much impressed with the beneficial tendency of the institution, as even to direct collections to be made for its benefit in all the churches & chapels within their bounds.

At Nuremberg, in Germany, a Bible Society had been formed, to which a number of persons, not only in that empire, but in Switzerland also contributed; and the formation of which had been greatly promoted by a donation of 100*l.* voted by the committee of the English Bible Society. The Nuremberg Society had begun to print 5000 copies of a German Protestant edition of the New Testament, for distribution among the poor Protestants in Germany, who are greatly in want of the scriptures, and it is expected soon to be able to print a large edition of the established Lutheran Bible complete.

In the Prussian dominions it was proposed, under the auspices of some noblemen and general officers, to print a new edition of the Protestant Bohemian Bible, which had become very scarce. The committee had recommended the formation of a society for the purpose, and promised to contribute the sum of 100*l.* as soon as such a society should be begun.

But the influence of British example has extended even to the Roman Catholics in Germany. A priest of that communion avows his intention of promoting the establishment of a Bible Society among its members. He observes that, notwithstanding the blind bigotry which still too widely prevails in his Church, many of the clergy, both in Suabia and Bavaria, the number of whom daily increases, not only recommend but strongly promote the reading of the scriptures, particularly the New Testament. Subsequent information has assured the committee, that associations for printing and circulating the Holy Scriptures are actually forming among the Roman Catholics of Germany. To encourage these beginnings of good, the committee had authorized the Nuremberg society to distribute among the Roman Catholics 1000 New Testaments, to be paid for by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

With respect to the want of Bibles in different parts of the christian world, it had appeared that, in the southern provinces of Ireland, not above a third of the protestant families possess Bibles; and that amongst the papists, who are far more numerous, a Bible is not to be found in more than one out of 500 families; that the funds of the Dublin association are very inadequate to supply the increasing demands for Bibles; and that *English* Bibles are almost exclusively the objects of that demand among the

lower ranks, very few of whom can read Irish.

In Alsace the want of Bibles, both among the Protestants and Roman Catholics, had been stated to be so great, that the committee were induced to contribute with a view of remedying the evil.

In Sweden, owing to the paternal care of the goverment, and the general diffusion of religious knowledge and zeal, no want of Bibles exists. Bibles also, in the languages of Finland and Lapland, are currently distributed by societies formed for the purpose.

In Holland the poorest people can procure Bibles, and the deacons are accustomed to make strict inquiry of each individual, whether he possesses a Bible and reads it.

A correspondence had also, it is said, been opened with Denmark, Russia, and Bengal.

The Editor has received the following memoir from a friend, a minister of the gospel, in the country. He wishes that many others, who may have it in their power, would forward articles equally proper for insertion in the magazine. This communication was accompanied with the assurance that the person alluded to in the memoir lives within a few miles of the residence of the minister who sent it: so that the statement may be relied on as strictly true.

The subject of this little memoir, D—— R—— has nothing very remarkable in his case, except, that from being a *blasphemer*, he has become a zealous follower of Jesus Christ, and from an enemy, a friend of his disciples. He was born of religious parents, and, probably, from his earliest years received some measure of pious instructions. He did not, however, long enjoy the benefit of parental instruction or example. Early in the revolutionary war, while quite a boy, he entered as a drummer into the army. His lively imagination amused with parade, his youthful mind dissipated with the levity of camps, and his conscience stupified by the din of war, he soon forgot the impressions which had been made in early youth. Continuing with the army through the whole war, with little else before him but sin and folly, he became quite indifferent to every thing that was serious. And because the scriptures were unfriendly to his manner of life, (for he had become debauched,) he gradually imbibed a disrelish for religion, and at length, deserted of the Lord for a season, he settled down in unbelief. Happy for several others if he had been satisfied with infidelity in himself. But this was not the case. Possessing an understanding naturally good, endowed with a lively fancy, and great facility of speech, he became a zealous opposer of the gospel and an unwearied seducer of the unwary. Employed as a teacher, he had much leisure time, which he chiefly occupied in reading infidel books and corrupting youthful minds; in which, alas, he was too successful. At length, however, (influenced, no doubt, by that blessed Spirit whose workings are often secret and mysterious, as well as effectual) he began to think that having been long employed in destroying the faith of others, it was now high time to lay a foundation for his own future hopes. Misguided as he was, he still felt that it is appointed for all men once to die, and after that, *perhaps*, the judgment. This idea once fixed in his mind, rendered him very uneasy. He began to think that it was a serious thing to go out of one world into another. It appeared to him so great a thing, as to make it really necessary for him to have a system which could assure him of safety beyond the grave. At first, he had but little doubt that he should find such a system well arranged and firmly established in his lately favourite authors. He therefore took them up anew; but with views somewhat different from those he had formerly entertained. Once he read them as a scoffing infidel; now he searched them, though still an unbeliever, to be enlightened about another world. He looked eagerly into every page. He examined closely every favourite passage. But no sound was heard from God;—no voice from eternity. Clouds and darkness rested on the grave, and the peradventures which were beyond it, he could not bear. He became anxious, and began to address his former companions, and admonish them that they were not quite so safe as they imagined;—to tell them, that deriding Jesus did not prepare them for eternity;—that starting an objection did not enlighten the way to judgment. The arrows of the Almighty which had for some time been sticking in him, now entered his soul, and, slain by conviction, he began to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner. Desirous of relief from any quarter, asking health from any physician, he turned to his Bible, which had been neglected and despised for many years.

And while he weeping asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there?" he that came to save the lost, passed by, and said unto him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" In about three months, Jesus sent his Spirit to teach him to believe; to show him the requirements of the perfections and the law of God; to inform him that *He* by his obedience and his death had satisfied these requirements and was now "the way unto the Father." He believed and was happy. He is now industriously employing himself to recover those whom he led astray. It is to be feared that with some he will find this no easy task. The man, new in his belief and feelings, thus addresses himself in a letter to one of his former acquaintance, to whom he had been under considerable obligations.

"I have just time by Mr. —— to wish you good morning; which I do with sincerity, and I beg of you to accept of this scrap of paper as a testimony of my remembrance, sincere love, and gratitude. I wish these may find you all enjoying good health, together with every other blessing consistent with the divine will of the benevolent and adorable Creator. I am well; my family are all well; I feel happy, truly happy; blessed, blessed be God my Saviour. O! I can never, never enough bless, praise, and adore his name. I never knew what it was to enjoy *real* pleasure, substantial pleasure, true comfort, and "joy unspeakable" till within a few weeks past. I am, no doubt, a monument of wonder to all who know me. I am a wonder to myself, and stand astonished while I contemplate on the unsearchable riches of sovereign grace. Who could think! Could I ever have myself believed, that *I myself* should have been made a willing subject of divine grace, and have been brought within the sweet embrace of *redeeming love*. I now *know* that there is a *reality* in the religion of Jesus, and that it has enkindled, I humbly trust, a hope within my breast, in comparison with which, millions of worlds are less than nothing, and vanity. Could I give you a description of all I have felt since I left —— it would undoubtedly astonish you; but it is impossible to do it."

Thus a new encouragement is prepared for the friends of piety to put their trust in God, and pray for their deluded relatives; and thus as we hope another brand is plucked from the burning, a sinner saved, and another harp prepared for the everlasting praise of Him who sitteth on the throne, and of the Lamb.

POETRY.

VERSION OF THE GREEK HYMN,

Inserted page 552.

O blessed God! to Thee I raise
My voice in grateful hymns of praise;
And, when my voice shall silent be,
My silence shall be praise to Thee:
For *voice* and *silence* both impart
The filial homage of my heart;
And both alike are understood
By Thee, the parent of all good,
Father divine, unsearchable!
Whose boundless love no tongue can tell!

MARIA.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PAST YEAR.

Another year its rapid race has run,
Replete with wonderous scenes: what strange effects
A year, an hour, a moment may produce!
How many, who a few short months ago
The sunshine of prosperity enjoyed,
And trod the summit of terrestrial bliss,
Nor knew the precipice on which they stood,
Are now o'erwhelmed in misery's deep abyss,
Where keen adversity's impervious clouds
Perpetual low'r; while some, whose hapless lips
For many a year had drank the very dregs
Of sorrow's bitter cup, now joyful taste
Pleasure's rich draught, and hail the new-born year
With new delight. Nor is the power of time
To individual destinies alone
Confined: the fate of prosperous nations oft
Hangs by a thread, which time's destructive scythe
Can in an instant sever, and destroy
Their boasted grandeur.
Thus, since from darkness and primeval night,

Creation, at Jehovah's high command
Transcendent rose, has time moved swiftly on,
And still shall move, till that tremendous day,
When nature's ample magazine shall burst,
And flames sulphureous from ten thousand cracks
Shall rend the groaning earth! When boiling seas
Shall burst their shores, and roll their foaming waves
In furious inundations, mingling all
Their whelming horrors with devouring fires,
Till all the elements with fervent heat
Shall melt! When the refulgent orb of day,
Quenched by th' Eternal's finger, shall go out
In utter darkness, and yon silver moon,
With crimson shades suffus'd, shall lose her beams;
While all the glittering stars become extinct,
Brilliant no more! When this capacious globe,
By subterraneous fires and lightnings fierce
Convulsed, and from her shattered axle torn,
A heap of burning ruins shall become:
And when th' archangel Gabriel's awful trump
Shall call the slumbering tenants of the grave
Before Immanuel's face, and through the heavens
Proclaim aloud, that *time shall be no more!*

FREDERICUS.

SONNET TO SOLITUDE.

Nymph of the vale retir'd! beneath thy shades
And silent gloom, my pensive spirit dwells;
Traces thy winding streams, thy distant glades,
Thy walks umbrageous, and thy lonely dells.
And fain I'd fly from all the painful care
Of active life, and seek thy deep recess;
Indulge the visions which now faintly share
My varied hours;—fair dreams of happiness!

Wrapt in thy balmy rest, beyond the tomb
On wings of faith sublime, I fain would soar;
Pant for the raptures of the life to come,
And feel the weight of present woe no more:

But ah! confin'd to toil at duty's call,
Though weary of the load, I bear it all.

P.

SONNET TO THE MEADOW LARK.

Sweet bird! who lov'st the meadows' dewy sweets,
And wak'st with plaintive tones the early day;
Dear to the bosom which responsive beats
The sentiment of sorrow in thy lay.

Touch'd by the strain, the sympathetic chord
Of mellow'd sadness, wakes its tend'rest flow;
And recollection feels the hour restor'd
Of deeper anguish, and more pointed woe.

For then, sweet bird! thy soft, unvaried strain,
Sooth'd the long hours of uniform distress;
Stole for awhile upon the sense of pain,
And gave a pause to hopeless wretchedness.

And still thy notes a pensive charm impart,
To calm the sorrows of an aching heart.

P.

INDEX.

ANECDOTES,
On human learning, 46
The caviller reproved, 47
Respecting profane swearing, 91
Of forty soldiers, 95
Mr. Thomas, a missionary, 96
Respecting duelling, 152
Of Julian's (the apostate) soldiers, 200
a woman, 254
Calvin and Eckius, *ib.*
a poor man and a gentleman, 256
La Raveillere l'Epaux, 303
Rev. Reece Pritchard, 251
Lord Chesterfield, 352
James Rose, 399
two ministers, 493
Tetzel, 543
the Methodists, 544
An eastern, 592
Antiquities, 141, 193, 249, 282
Apostles, (the) on the credibility of their testimony, 526
Asiaticus and Theophilus, 331, 391

BAPTIZING for the dead, 34
Bible, about to be printed in the Welsh and Gaelic languages, 452
——— on certain objections against the, 23
——— Society instituted in London, 20
——— Society, report of a committee of the, 597
Biblical Criticism,
On John xi. 4, 33
Ecclesiastes xi. 9, 187
Psalm 50th, 442

CHRISTIAN experiences, and revivals of religion, hints respecting, 230, 347, 398
——— religion independent of philosophy, 477
Christians, (ancient and modern) on their comparative advantages to know the truth, 534
Church (Presbyterian) in the Northern Liberties, dedicated, 206
——— (Baptist) at Blockley, opened, 207
——— organized at Hebron, (N. Y.) 451
Committee of Missions' report to the General Assembly, 305
——— members of, for 1805, 358

DAVIES, (Rev. Samuel) letters from, 371, 425, 538, 578
Dead, on baptizing for the, 34, 36
Dialogue on the gratification of taste, 474, 510
Dream, remarkable account of a, 235
Duelling, General Assembly bear their testimony against, 257

EXPOSITION,
Of the fiftieth psalm, 442
1 Corinthians, xi. 1—12, 493
Genesis iv. 23, 24, 535
——— chap. 20, 583
Isaiah ix. 5, 535
Ecclesiastes vii. 16, 17, 536
——— xii. 1—7, 586

FIRST-FRUITS, ceremony of blessing, in the Greek churches, 97
Fragments, 427
Free-thinking, an essay on, 574
Friends (the) account of their committee's exertions to civilize the Indians, 499, 545, 593

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, resolution of, for increasing their committee of Missions, 358
Greenlander, reasoning of a, 198
Grier, (Rev. J.) letter from, 581

HOLINESS and virtue, an essay on, 322
Hume's (David) objection to the miracles of the gospel, 182

IMMORTALITY, an essay on, 520
Infidel, an account of one reclaimed, 598
Infidelity, absurdities of, 227

JESUS CHRIST, miracles of, 174, 210
Journal of J. C. 302, 343, 381
Justification, Hooker on, 26

LETTERS,
From London, 20, 451
a member of the synod of Pittsburgh, 21
New-Hartford, 22
Mr. Carey, 32, 201
a clergyman, 197
the secretary of the United Brethrens' missionary Society, 202

LETTERS,
From a clergyman in North-Carolina, 251
an Indian, 252
Respecting the Indians, *ib.*
From Rev. Gideon Blackburn, 259, 356, 357, 407
London Missionary society, 305
Society of the United Brethren, 307
Rev. Robert Finley, 353
—— Samuel Davies, 371, 425, 538, 578
—— James Hughs, 401, 548
—— J. Grier, 581
the Malabar coast, 596
Liberality, the sentiments of primitive christians on, 45
Love to God and man, 419

MAHOMETAN creed, 151
Manners, (fashionable) thoughts on, 273
Memoirs,
Of Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, 17
Justin Martyr, 66, 107
Rev. Dr. Samuel Finley, 71
Sarah Crowell, 98
Rev. Dr. Hezekiah Smith, 101
—— Jonathan Edwards, 116
—— Dr. Ezra Stiles, 163
—— Gilbert Tennent, 238
—— Dr. John B. Smith, 267
———— James Sproat, 315, 362, 414, 461
———— John Ewing, 409
Mrs. Mary Vowel, 454
Rev. Dr. Francis Allison, 457
a young woman, 548
Rev. Dr. George Duffield, 553
Missionaries, reports from, in India, 28
———————— in the United States, 309, 311, 357, 401, 405, 407, 449
Missionary attempts, by the Dutch reformed church, 15
Protestant episcopal, *ib.*
Methodists, *ib.*
Missionary Societies, viz.
Of the United Brethren, 12
The London, 13
Baptist, 14
———— at Philadelphia, 15
Scotch, 16
General Assembly, 57
New-York, 106
Connecticut, 162
Massachusetts, 209
New-Hampshire, 313
Missionary spirit, thoughts on, 62
Missions, introductory account of, 9

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, 375, 421, 531, 564

OBITUARY,
Mrs. Mary Creed, 52
Peter Wetherill, 53
Rev. Eli Forbes, *ib.*
—— Nathan Ker, 54
—— Seth Higby *ib.*
William Small, *ib.*
Sarah Crowell, 98
Rev. Dr. Hezekiah Smith, 101
———— Samuel Parker, 102
John Sloss Hobart, *ib.*
J. G. Mathys, 158
Mrs. Mary Vowel, 454
Opinion, errors of, essay on, 277
Ordination of James Carnahan, 98

PANOPLIST, (the) a new publication, notice of, 359
Parental love, the influence of, 398
Peace, essay on, 228
Peter, (the apostle) life of, 556
Philosopher's stone, discovered, 41
Philosophy, christian religion independent of, 477
Physico theology, 137
Plagiarist, (the) 35, 77, 124, 170
POETRY,
The gardener and rose tree, 54
On the death of a child, *ib.*
A Latin hymn, 55
———————— translated, 103
Inscription on a tree, 56
The christian time-piece, 102
A new-year's hymn, 103
Written after a visit to Philadelphia, 104
An ode, 159
A sacramental hymn, 160
The dying christian's soliloquy, *ib.*
By a clergyman on the death of his son, 207
A hymn, 208, 360
On the divine presence, 262
A prayer, written in a prospect of suffering, 264
Epigramma, *ib.*
———————— translated, 455
Paraphrase of Habakkuk iii. 17, 18, 304
Sonnet to fancy, 359
On the death of Voltaire, 455
Composed under mental distress, and bodily infirmity, 456
Sonnet to night, *ib.*
———————— Schuylkill, *ib.*
———————— benevolence, 504
Parody of a well known song, *ib.*
A Greek hymn, 552
———————— translated, 599
On the birth of a child, 552
Reflections on the past year, 599
Sonnet to solitude, 600
———————— the meadow lark, *ib.*

Preaching, an essay on, 128
Presbytery of Philadelphia, extract from their minutes, 207
Preservation, (special) 234
Prophecies, (ancient) on the accomplishment of, 221
Proselyte, explained, 214
Psalm fiftieth, remarks on the, 442
——— one hundred and ninth, remarks on the, 287
Pulpit eloquence defended, 289
——————— reply to, 294
Public worship, 136

QUERY, answer to a, 85
Questions on Acts vi. 1. and Rom. ix. 3, 95
——— answered, 145
——— relating to Baptism, 151
——— relating to the writers of the New Testament, 424

REFLECTIONS, by a lady, 378
Religion, report of a committee on the state of, 59, 257
——— remarks on the late revivals of, 83
——— the sum of, 94
——— revivals of, 251, 450, 451
Religious Intelligence, 49, 97, 153, 201, 257, 305, 353, 401, 449, 497, 545, 593
Remarks, miscellaneous, 47
Repose, reasons of, 339, 542, 588
Resignation, (christian) essay on, 218
Revelation superior to reason, 131
Reviews of,
The Refuge, 190
The Kingdom of Christ, a missionary sermon by the Rev. E. D. Griffin, 326
Guide to Domestic Happiness, 430
Dr. Dwight's sermon on Dueling, 433, 483
The Sabbath, 439
Bogue's Essay on the New-Testament, 487
Rewards of the Righteous, 366

SANCTIFICATION, essay on, 24
Scepticism, an allegory, 225
Scriptures, (christian) internal evidence of, 178
Society, at Boston, for propagating the gospel among the Indians, 265
Soldier, a remarkable story of a, 296
Stephen, life of, 505
Swearing, (profane) anecdote respecting, 91

TASTE, on the gratification of, 474, 510
Texts illustrated,
1 Corinthians, xv. 29, 34
Ecclesiastes xi. 9, 187
Romans ix. 3, 197
Exodus ix. 16, 385
Genesis iv. 23, 24, 585
Isaiah ix. 5, *ib.*
Ecclesiastes vii. 16, 17, 536
Time, calculation of, 568
Tongue, on the government of the, 44